

Fast Track to

Google

ADVANCED

AdWords

AdSense

Google Spreadsheets

Google Docs

Google Analytics

Google Calendar

Blogger

Orkut

Gmail and Google Talk

Google Moon and Google Mars

Google Video

Dodgeball

Google Groups

more - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Tools Help

Search

Search Web

co.in/int/en/options/

Search Web

Answers

Ask a question, set a price, get an answer

Blog Search

Find blogs on your favorite topics

Book Search

Search the full text of books

Calendar

Organise your schedule and share events with

Directory

Browse the web by topic

Groups

Create mailing lists and discussion groups

Images

Search for images on the web

Google Tools



Blogger

Express yourself online



Code

Download APIs and open source code



Desktop

Search your own computer



Pack

A free collection of essential software



Jasubhai
DIGITAL MEDIA

Fast Track to **Google Advanced**

By Team Digit

A majority of Google's tools
had been given in our
Digit Archive CD
bundled with Digit's December 2006 issue.

HOPE YOU BOUGHT IT LAST MONTH.

Credits

The People Behind This Book

EDITORIAL

Deepak Ajwani Editor

Robert Sovereign-Smith Copy Editor

Ram Mohan Rao Writer, Copy Editor

Nimish Chandiramani Copy Editor

Arjun Ravi Writer

Prakash Balakoor Writer

Srikanth R Writer

Samir Makwana Writer

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Shivshankar Pillai, Vijay Padaya Layout Designers

Sivalal S Layout and Cover Design

Harsho Mohan Chatteraj Illustrator

© Jasubhai Digital Media

Published by Maulik Jasubhai on behalf of Jasubhai Digital Media.

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher.

January 2007

Free with Digit. Not to be sold separately. If you have paid separately for this book, please e-mail the editor at editor@thinkdigit.com along with details of location of purchase, for appropriate action.

There's more to it...

If you ever wondered how much there was to Google, the fact that this Fast Track was divided into two parts should provide sufficient indication. Our first part given with Dec 2006 issue of *Digit* covered the Basics of Google.

This time round, we feature advanced level features and services from Google in the domain of 'Digital Business' to help you find out how your business - big or small - can benefit through Google's services, and 'Digital Leisure'—things to do when you're not busy making money for yourself.

Not very recently, Google took a step in the "Kill MS Office" direction with Google Spreadsheets, which promises to replace Excel in the future. The acquisition of Writely came soon, and became Google Docs. Try them out—they can both replace your office suite for basic documentation. Following suit in the productivity department is Google Calendar to help you keep organised.

Nearly everyone's using AdSense on their Web sites today—find out how you can do so for yours. Also read up on AdWords and how they can help you promote your business better. There are also a bunch of tools to optimise your site—Analytics and Sitemap will not only make life easier, they'll even help your search rankings.

After all that, tell the world about your day with Blogger, track down old friends with Orkut, and entertain yourself at Google Video and YouTube. You can also take a trip to Mars or the Moon and enjoy the latter's cheesy goodness (turn to the chapter to see what this means!). Finally, there's Google Groups to interact with people who have the same interests, or just discuss any topic you want to.

And there you have it—the dope on practically all Google's services, right there on your bookshelf.

CONTENTS

DIGITAL BUSINESS

Chapter 1	AdWords	10
1.1	Enter Google	10
1.2	So What Is AdWords?	12
Chapter 2	AdSense	19
2.1	Free Money... How?	19
2.2	Here's Where The Money Is	20
2.3	Getting Cracking	21
2.4	Content, Or Search, Or Both?	22
2.5	AdSense For Blogger	26
2.6	So Can I Keep Making Money?	26
2.7	Payments	27
Chapter 3	Google Spreadsheets	29
3.1	Introduction	29
3.2	Using Google Spreadsheets	30
3.3	Concluding Remarks	35
Chapter 4	Google Docs	37
4.1	Introduction	37
4.2	Using GD	37
4.3	A Note on File Sizes	46
4.4	Configuring GD	46
4.5	Concluding Remarks	47
Chapter 5	For Your Site	49
5.1	Google Analytics	49

5.2	Google Base	57
5.3	Google Co-Op	60

Chapter 6 Google Checkout 71

6.1	Buyers	72
6.2	Merchants	72
6.3	Limitations	73

Chapter 7 Google Calendar 75

7.1	Introduction	75
7.2	Using GC	75
7.3	Integration With Other Google Services	84
7.4	Configuring A UC	85
7.5	Configuring GC	86

DIGITAL LEISURE

Chapter 8 Blogger 91

8.1	Introduction	91
8.2	The Essentials Of Blogging	92
8.3	Using Blogger	92
8.4	The Beta	98
8.5	Concluding Remarks	101

Chapter 9 Orkut 103

9.1	Introduction	103
9.2	Understanding Orkut	103
9.3	Using Orkut	105
9.4	Caution	113
9.5	Concluding Remarks	114

Chapter 10	Gmail and Google Talk	115
10.1	Introduction	115
10.2	Using Gmail	116
10.3	Advantages of Using the Standard Interface	124
10.4	Differences between the Standard and HTML interface	125
10.5	Accessories	126
10.6	Google Talk	128
 Chapter 11	 Google Moon and Google Mars	 131
11.1	What Is Google Moon?	131
11.2	What Is Google Mars?	133
 Chapter 12	 Google Video	 137
12.1	Getting Started	138
12.2	Uploading A Video	139
12.3	Embedding Videos On Your Site Or Blog	141
 Chapter 13	 Dodgeball	 143
13.1	How It Works	145
 Chapter 14	 Hello	 149
14.1	What It Does	149
14.2	How Hello Works	150
14.3	In Conclusion	154
 Chapter 15	 Google Groups	 155
 Notes		 161

Digital Business



AdWords

Online advertising commands less than a twentieth of the total ad spending revenue worldwide. In the US, online advertisements generated revenue of over \$15.6 billion of \$263 billion, according to the NY Post. With online ad spending growing at a rate of 25 to 30 per cent (mediapost.com) and advertisers shifting ad spending from other media to online, online advertising is set to grow at a tremendous pace. Ford motors, for example, dropped its budget for print media ads from 23.5 to 21 per cent, and increased online ad spending from 3 to 3.5 percent for the year 2006- 2007 (www.searchengineguide.com).

1.1 Enter Google

Net giants like Google and Yahoo!, whose brand name and brand recall is the highest, needless to say, get the lion's share of online ad spending. In 2006, Google was expected to get nearly a quarter of the online advertising share in the US, while Yahoo! was expected to grab about 20.7 percent of the chunk (source: news.com.com).

So what makes advertising on Google advantageous when Yahoo! is the most popular Web site, with 400 million monthly users? The simple answer is that Google commands 50 per cent of search hits the world over, with Yahoo! and MSN sliding down to 23.4 and 9.2 per cent respectively for 2006 (www.money.cnn.com)!

Context-based advertising on search engines allows companies of all sizes to reach their target audiences. A small company that wants to advertise in a newspaper would have to shell out thousands of rupees for a small ad, which may or may not be looked at by potential customers, whereas in context-based advertising, you only pay if interest is shown by the customer, making the money spent more worthwhile. Ads are positioned on the sponsored links

according to the cost per click set by the advertiser, and also by the number of times the ad was clicked by users (called the click-through rate). The position of an ad could go from second or third to first position for a particular keyword.

Let's take an example to see why online advertising is advantageous. Suppose you have a computer accessories shop in Mumbai and want to place an ad. For a size of 2 by 3 inches in the middle pages of a newspaper, it will cost you about Rs 4,000 with a leading one, and most of the time, it will be ignored by the reader. Similarly, a 10-second slot on a leading TV channel will cost the advertiser Rs 1,80,000. And a 10-second slot will not allow brand recall unless it is shown many times over!

TV also isn't suitable if your business is catering to only one city. If you advertise using Google's AdWords, you can set the budget you think is appropriate, and set the cost per click and also target a region. Since you own a computer accessories shop, keywords relating to your business would be "monitor," "keyboard," "mouse," etc. When a Net user types in one of these keywords, your ad is shown in the sponsored links column of the search results, and the position of your ad will be according to the cost per click you'd set. If your cost per click is lower than that of your competitors, the placement of your ad will be lower. But, if the number of clicks to your ad is more, the placement of the ad will rise—irrespective of the cost per click!

All said and done, it is obvious that other media cannot be ignored. When a new product is introduced on media such as TV or radio, it creates an interest in the consumer—which cannot be done online. The reach of TV, radio and newspapers is also far greater than online, at least in countries such as India. Products like beds, food, cars, and so on cannot be sold online. Online advertising can only be good for certain goods and services.

1.2 So What Is AdWords?

The screenshot shows a Google search results page for the query "Microwave Oven". At the top, the Google logo is on the left, and navigation links for "Web", "Images", "Video", "News", "Maps", and "more" are on the right. Below the logo is a search bar containing "Microwave Oven" and a "Search" button. To the right of the search bar are links for "Advanced Search" and "Preferences".

Below the search bar, the text "Web" is on the left, and "Results 1 - 10 of about 7,790,000 for Microwave Oven [definition]" is on the right. The main content area is titled "Product search results for Microwave Oven". It lists several product listings with images, titles, and prices. For example, "Share Black Over-the-Range 2.1-cu.-ft. Microwave Oven" is listed for \$359.99 at Target. Other listings include "Daeung 2016-31A 300W Compact Microwave Oven - White" for \$64.99 at OVC, Inc., and "SHARP R-151TU Microwave Oven R-151TU" for \$299.99 at Buy.com.

Below the product listings, there are several organic search results. The first is from Wikipedia, titled "Microwave oven - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia". The second is from HowStuffWorks, titled "HowStuffWorks 'How Microwave Cooking Works'". The third is from The History of the Microwave Oven, titled "The History of the Microwave Oven". The fourth is from Complete Microwave Oven Troubleshooting, Repair and Information, titled "Complete Microwave Oven Troubleshooting, Repair and Information". The fifth is from Microwave Ovens, titled "Microwave Ovens".

On the right side of the page, there is a "Sponsored Links" section. It contains several advertisements for microwave ovens. The first is "Major Brand Appliances" with the text "Major Brand Appliances at Rock Bottom Prices" and the URL "www.shoplocal.com/appliances". The second is "Buy Bajaj Microwave Ovens" with the text "Most Affordable Microwave Ovens with free delivery for net order" and the URL "www.bajajelectronics.com". The third is "Appliances From Godrej" with the text "Appliances For Your Home. 3 Looks. Get Special Diwali Deals" and the URL "www.Godrej-Lifestyle.com". The fourth is "Microwave oven" with the text "Major Brand Appliances at Rock Bottom Prices. Buy Now get shopping indiatimes.com" and the URL "www.futurebazaar.com". The fifth is "Low Cost Ovens" with the text "We've Done The Research For You. Shop & Compare Prices on EveryRule.com" and the URL "www.EveryRule.com".

Watch out the Sponsored Links on the right column

AdWords is a trademarked name for Google's online keyword-based advertisement system. AdWords also refers to the keywords "taken" by the advertiser for the campaign. Taking the above example, the keywords "monitor," "keyboard," and "mouse" are called the AdWords. When a Google user searches on Google by typing in these keywords—which you as the advertiser have chosen—the ad appears on the right-hand side (or the top) of the results page, alongside the generic Web search results on the left. The placement of the ad depends upon the cost per click and also according to the relevance of the keyword to your ad, as explained before. EBay, for example, has purchased hundreds of fast-moving consumer keywords such as "mobile," "phone," "laptop," "iPod," and so on, so that when a potential user types in these keywords, he sees eBay.in (or eBay.com) in the sponsored links. Since eBay also has set a higher price for many of the keywords it has purchased (higher cost per click), eBay ads are displayed first in the sponsored ads section.

Remember that even if your site is listed in the organic links section, there is no guarantee that it will be listed in the first few search results. The Web link could be in one of the gazillions of pages of the search results!

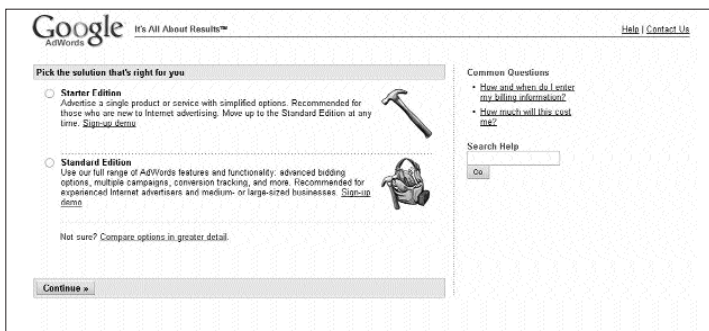
Sponsored Links have the name of the ad as the title followed with a very brief synopsis of the sponsored site. The title and synopsis of the ad is set by the advertiser. This is followed with the address to the Web site, which, again, is set by the advertiser.

The advertiser here has more control of the ad because he can project certain ads to only certain geographic locations, or by only certain languages, allowing him to precisely control ad spending. AdWords offers more value for money because the advertiser gets charged only when the user clicks the sponsored link. To know more, visit www.tigerwebsolutions.com/documents/TigerWebSolutions-AdWords_Presentation.ppt.

Building AdWords

There are two ways to sign up for AdWords, depending on the type of advertising campaign you are planning.

The Starter Edition is for advertisers who have a single product or service. This edition is targeted to those new to AdWords, and in general, to the SoHo segment. Starter Edition offers an easy-to-



The screenshot shows the Google AdWords selection interface. At the top, the Google AdWords logo is on the left, and the tagline "It's All About Results™" is in the center. On the far right, there are links for "Help" and "Contact Us". Below the header, a section titled "Pick the solution that's right for you" contains two radio button options. The first option, "Starter Edition", is accompanied by a hammer icon and describes a simplified product for new advertisers. The second option, "Standard Edition", is accompanied by a toolbox icon and describes a full range of features for experienced advertisers. To the right of these options is a "Common Questions" section with three bullet points: "How and when do I order my billing information?", "How much will they cost me?", and "Search Help". Below the questions is a search bar with a "Go" button. At the bottom left, there is a "Continue »" button.

Choosing the right edition

Google AdWords It's All About Results™

This sign-up wizard will make it easy to create your new ad campaign. Try it with no obligation. Your ad won't run until you submit your billing information at the end of the process. You can always change your ad or halt your campaign at any time.

1. Location and language [2]

Where are your customers located?
We'll show your ad to people in this area.

India (select a different country or territory)

OR

Target a region within this country or territory
<select a region>

What language will your ad be written in?

☒ English
☐ Another language

Location and Language Starter

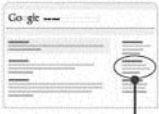
understand interface with a simplified sign-up process to advertise a single product or business. An advertiser can choose one or many keywords relating to his ad. Basic reporting like the number of clicks that was registered for the ad, the number of ads that were displayed for that keyword (the impressions), and the cost incurred due to clicks to advertisers advertisement are shown on this edition. One can also target ads to a city, country, or even by language in this edition.

2. Write your ad [2]

What site will your ad link to?
Users who click your ad will be sent to this website.

http://
Example: <http://www.example.com/products/item.htm>

What will your ad say?
All text ads contain a title, two lines of descriptive text, and a display URL. Make sure to include information that will help customers understand your business.
[The five keys to powerful ads](#) | [Editorial Guidelines](#)



Luxury cruise to Mars
Visit the Red Planet in style.
Low-gravity fun for everyone!
www.example.com

This is how your ad will look:

< Enter headline here > 25 max

< Enter line 1 here > 35 max

< Enter line 2 here > 35 max

Write Ad Here

This edition also has templates that assist one in building the ad, by asking a few simple questions. Step-by-step procedures allow the advertiser to get tips on what keywords should be selected.

3. Choose keywords [2]

Who will see your ad?
When people search Google for the keywords you choose here, your ad can show. Keywords must be directly related to your ad. (Don't enter 'real estate' when you're selling cars.) Enter 20 or fewer keywords for best results.
[Top secret keyword tips](#)

Enter as many specific words or phrases as you like, one per line:


<Type keywords here>

Examples:

mars cruise
mars cruises
luxury cruise to mars

Want more?
Enter any word to see related keywords:

► [Advanced option: match types](#)



Keywords

You fix your monthly budget and pay Google in your local currency. The more you spend for the keyword, the ad will be displayed more often with higher ad positioning when the keyword is typed into the search engine. This is a bidding process: ads of the highest-quoted keywords are displayed more often, with higher ad positioning.

AdWords Standard Edition has all the features of Starter Edition with a lot more tools. Here, ads can be targeted to multiple regions at once, whereas in the Starter Edition, it is only for one region or one language.

5. Set your budget [2]

What is your monthly budget?
AdWords shows your ad as often as possible within the budget you set. You're charged a small portion of the budget each time a user clicks your ad, so the higher your budget, the more ad impressions and clicks you may receive. You won't be charged more than this amount each month (though in some cases you may be charged less).

☐ 600 per month
☐ 2,000 per month
☐ 8,000 per month
☐ per month

Budgeting your ad spend

When it comes to the pricing of keywords, you have more options than with that of Starter Edition. Here, you have options of setting the price for each keyword, giving you, the advertiser, more control of how the ad money is spent, and proper strategising of the ad. For example, for the keywords we mentioned, you can select “keyboard” to be at a higher price per click than the rest, thus having the ad displayed more often for “keyboard.”

Welcome to AdWords

This sign-up wizard will help you create your own ad campaign in four easy steps: you'll target customers, write your ad, choose keywords, and set your spending limit. Try the wizard with no obligation: your ads won't actually appear until you verify your account and submit your billing information. And of course you can change your ads or stop your campaign at any time.

Target customers by language

What language(s) do your customers speak?

Hold down the **control** or **command** key to select multiple languages.

French	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
German	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hebrew	<input type="checkbox"/>
Italian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/>
Korean	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonwegian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Polish	<input type="checkbox"/>

Target customers by location

How large is the area where you'd like your ad to appear? Choose one:

- ☒ **Countries and territories** - Your ads will appear for searches made anywhere in the locations you select.
- ☐ **Regions and cities** - Your ads will appear for searches made in the regions and cities you choose. (Not available in all locations.)
- ☐ **Customized** - Your ads will appear for searches made within a specific distance from your business or other location you choose.

[< Back](#) [Continue >](#)

Customise as per your customers language preference

The content that goes as the brief description for the ad can also be bid for in this edition, where the highest bidder for keywords can display a certain set of words relating to the ad.

The placement of the ads—such as second position, also called position preference, can be done with the Standard Edition.

AdWords Standard Edition allows you to have multiple products with multiple ad campaigns, with each campaign having many keywords—and each one of these campaigns can run simultaneously.

For example, Tata, a diversified company, has multiple products and each product has multiple ads for different regions. The configuration for such a scenario can be done at the second page.

Standard Edition also provides

- Extensive report of impressions (number of ads that were displayed for that keyword)
- Number of times users clicked on your ads
- Statistics of impressions and click rates
- Billing of your ads, and custom reports like the region where the most number of clicks were generated, and the time of the clicks
- A graphical representation of the number of times each keyword was typed that month
- A traffic estimator that can estimate the traffic of certain keyword. It gives you the estimate as to when a particular keyword search was more, like the time of a month or a month of a year.
- Keyword tips so as to make the ad pop up more often
- An option to get the statistics of keywords, so that you can understand which keyword was used more often in the set of keywords that you chose—allowing you to strategise and plan

Choose a currency
Pay for this account using: <input type="text" value="Indian Rupee (INR)"/> View payment options
<small>This determines only how you pay us, not how you handle transactions with your customers. Note: This setting can't be changed once you activate your account.</small>
What is the most you would like to spend, on average, per day?
<small>The daily budget [?] controls your costs. When the daily limit is reached, on average, your ad will (The budget controls the frequency of your ad, not its position.) Raise or lower your budget as oft</small>
Enter your daily budget: <input type="text" value="1000000"/>
What is the maximum you are willing to pay each time someone clicks on
<small>You influence your ad's position by setting its maximum cost per click (CPC) [?]. The max CPC willing to pay each time a user clicks on your ad. Your max CPC can be changed as often as yo</small>
Enter your maximum CPC: <input type="text"/> (Minimum: 0.45)
<small>Higher CPCs lead to higher ad positions, which usually get more clicks.</small>

Bidding for top honors

keywords more effectively

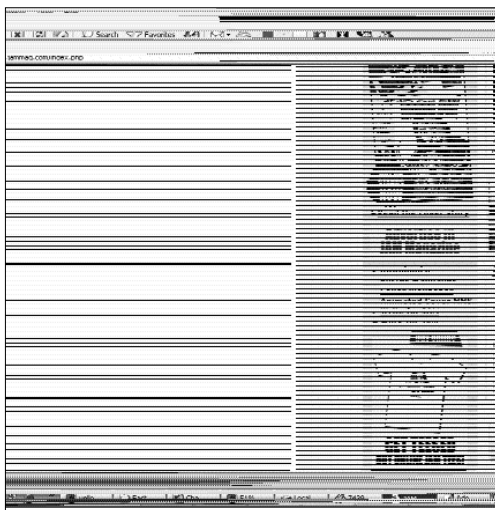
- Hints on relevant sites where ads can be placed through AdSense (discussed in the next chapter) so as to increase traffic to your site

AdSense

Where there's a will, there's a way to make money—and Google is all but handing it to you on a big silver platter. Everyone knows Google makes tons and tons of money, and with AdSense, it looks like Google's opening the doors to the safe and sharing. Of course they're not—they're just making more money themselves—but like any good Samaritan, are giving you your share as well. So if you're a popular blogger, or own a Web page that gets a lot of hits, here's your payoff.

2.1 Free Money... How?

How does a channel like Star Plus make money? How does a newspaper like *The Times of India* make money? Just in case you didn't already know, the answer is ads. Advertisers pay the channel or the newspaper to have their ads broadcast or print, as the case may be. The



You don't need to be hosted by Google to have AdSense

growth of the Web meant that it, too, became a profitable media channel. This resulted in the advertisers who previously had their ads on TV or on radio begin to advertise on the Web as well. Now here's where a company like Google comes in (Yahoo!, too, offers a

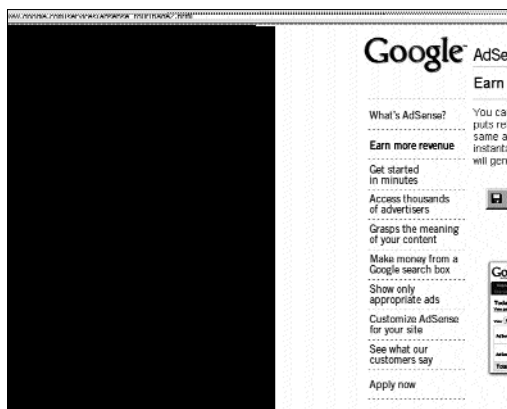
similar service). Google's got a bunch of advertisers dying to advertise on anything that Google touches because as we know, anything that Google does on the Web usually turns to gold. Since AdWords already takes up the advertising place on Google's search pages, the only place to go is all the blogs and sites that Google hosts, that is, Google gives out ad space on Blogger sites and blogs that it has. This was the case for a while, until a few months ago. These days, AdSense is not restricted to just Google sites; any Web site can host "Ads by Google."

How does this work? It involves an application and review procedure; basically, what Google does is, it gives all the advertisers who want online space to advertise their stuff the opportunity to do so. And in return for the advertising space on your blog or Web page, it gives you the chance to make money.

Now, advertising on the Web is a bit different from advertising in a print publication—you don't get money for just placing the ad on your site...

2.2 Here's Where The Money Is

Essentially, there are two ways in which you can get money using AdSense. The first is pay-per-click (PPC). Via this method, you get paid every time someone clicks on an ad on your Web page or blog. The second method



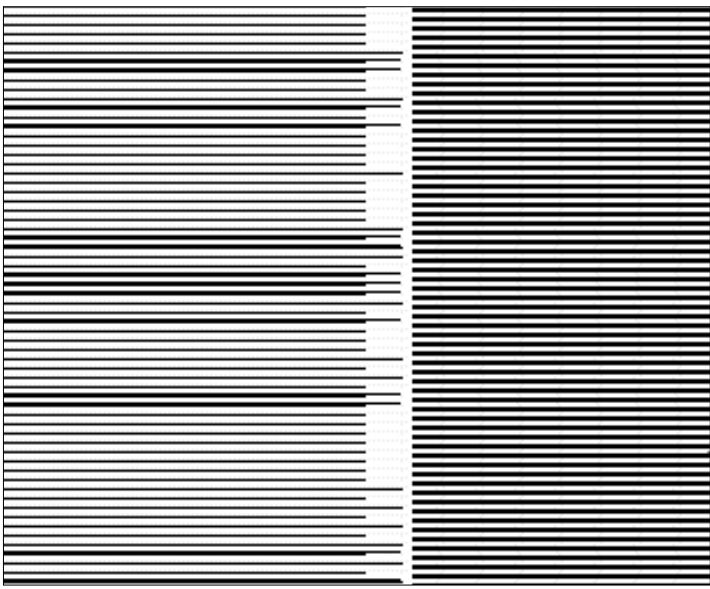
It'll be a while before you can make that much

is pay-per-thousand-impressions (PPM). Via this method, you get paid a certain amount for every thousand unique page views your Web page gets. Google has algorithms and formulas that determine what kind of ad (PPC or PPM) will get you the highest returns.

2.3 Getting Cracking

Here's a step-by-step guide to getting the moolah.

1. Go to www.google.com
2. Click on the link that says "Advertising Programs"
3. Take the AdSense tour
4. Click on "Click Here To Apply"
5. Fill in the form
6. Wait two to three days while Google reviews and approves your request
7. Log in to your AdSense account



It begins right on where Google begins



Music site = MP3 player ad.

8. Click on the “AdSense for Content” tab. There is also the option of “AdSense for Search” which follows the same procedure.
9. Click on the “Ad Colors” tab and select the layout for the ads.
10. Copy and paste the HTML code from the “Ad Layout Code” tab into your Web site’s template
11. Voila, ads on your Web site!

It really is that simple.

AdSense gives you two ways to make money—one is using “AdSense for Content” and the other is using “AdSense for Search.”

2.4 Content, Or Search, Or Both?

AdSense for Content relates to what we’ve spoken of thus far. What we didn’t mention was that the ads that Google will display on your site are related to the content on the page. This means that depending on the content on your Web site, the ads that are displayed will change. For example, if your Web site has content about music, AdSense displays ads about artists, audio devices, and such.

Made For AdSense

Essentially, Google is what is known as a scraper site. It uses Web scraping, that is, it makes the use of Web crawlers to index content in the form of search results. Now this is a fair and legal use of other people's content, that is, for the purpose of indexing. However, some scraper sites make use of the "scraped" content and plagiarize it for their own use. How do they use this content? Essentially, an illegal scraper site is created for monetising content from AdSense. Such a site is in the parlance called

Attention Publishers!

The Google Adwords and AdSense programs are in jeopardy, in jeopardy of losing credibility as a quality pay per click advertisement service because they've allowed made for AdSense websites that pay \$0.01 - \$0.05 per click and destroy your website(s) reputation, to abuse their system. Since Google refuses to solve problems, we at ABL are offering you the solution.

When you subscribe to ABL you will be given the opportunity to submit and receive a list of these websites that are costing you a lot of money, potentially. No more links to "sponsored results" pages, forgot ads with no relevant content, no more ads linked to cookie-cutter content farms.

Why would I use AdsBlackList?

There are three main reasons.

- 1) Increase your AdSense revenue up to 50%
- 2) Increase the reputation of your website by NOT linking to Made for AdSense sites
- 3) Save the quality of contextual advertising in global

In other words, subscribing to ABL and submitting MFA sites that you've discovered, you will be helping yourself to make more money and helping your customers to find quality information when they click on your AdSense ad.

Join now, it's Free!

AdsBlackList Top 30

ABL site	Rank
8-topites.com	2,094
toseeka.com	2,463
5-top-sites.com	4,620
diggit.com	5,035
first4sites.net	6,125
everyrule.com	6,764
25-topites.com	7,366
purebusiness.com	10,418
thinktarget.com	11,007
healthline.com	11,270
toontenites.org	11,504

DEMO - How does AdsBlackList generator work

Instead of writing boring explanation, allow us to demonstrate it for you

URL:

Keywords:

Category:

- ☒ Made for Ads [P]
- ☒ Low Cost Per Click [P]

[Get Black List!](#)

Adsblacklist.com—the MFA watchdog

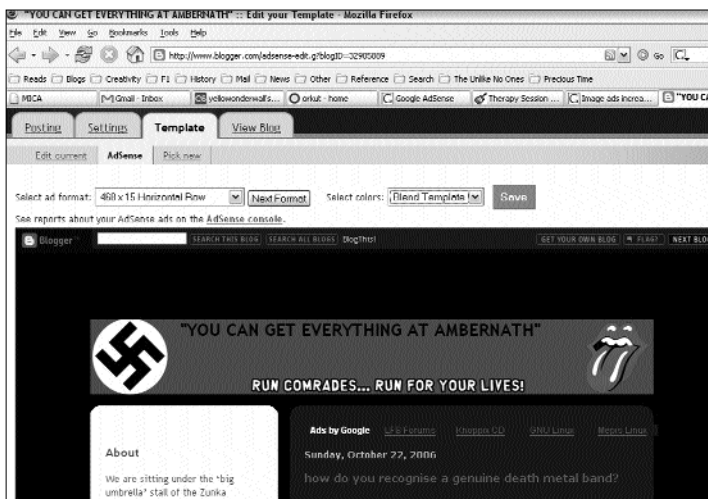
an MFA or a Made For AdSense site. Scrapers take content from sites that have highly-searched keywords and use them to generate high-revenue clicks from unknowing users who click on these sites thinking them to be some other, legitimate sites. For example, the site www.everyrule.com is a shopping site that claims to offer great prices on a host of products. But the links displayed are almost all AdSense ads. So anything you click is an AdSense click for the webmaster of Everyrule, who is making money off these clicks. Visit www.adsblacklist.com for a whole bunch of blacklisted MFA sites.



Google Search right on your webpage!

Google claims that AdSense can grasp the context of your content and thus deliver relevant ads to your page. Sometimes, however, you may get ads that are completely unrelated to the content of your page. These are rare, though, and Google does its job well for the most part. You can also choose to block certain types of ads from your site. For example, if your page has content about music or entertainment, you can choose to block ads related to, say, real estate. You can also choose to show only one category of ads if you're not happy with blocking tons of categories.

Google also lets you customise the ads on your page in such a way that they can merge with the template of your site. It offers a colour palette so you can choose the border and font colours that would best match your site's template. It does this for Blogger automatically, that is, the colours used by the ads are automatically configured to match those that you use on your blog.



Blogger makes AdSense common sense

AdSense for Search involves the addition of a Google search box to your page, that is, you put a search box on your page that is “powered by Google.” The way it works is, you put the Google search box on your site, and every time someone uses it to either search the Web or your site, AdSense brings up sponsored links as search results in addition to the regular search results—it’s quite like searching via www.google.com. The money comes in when people click on the ads in their search results.

2.5 AdSense For Blogger

Blogger has very simply integrated AdSense into blogs hosted on Blogspot. Here's an easy guide to configure AdSense on Blogger.

1. Sign in to your Blogger account
2. On your blog's dashboard, click Change Settings
3. Click on the Template tab and hit the AdSense button
4. The rest is pretty much right there for you to see and do...
Select the "ad format" that you prefer, that is, the ad size on your blog, and then select the colours you'd like the ads to have
5. Click Save

2.6 So Can I Keep Making Money?

Simply put, yes! You can keep making money as long as people are clicking the ads on your page. The site Freeweblayouts.net that gives people MySpace templates makes about \$100,000 a month via AdSense clicks (from a Washington Post report)! So does that mean you can click on your own ads and it'll count?

Really now, is that even a question to ask? The obvious answer is no. There are tons of people who are caught by the law for click fraud. Essentially, these people, either themselves, or via automated programs, simulate browser clicks on ads. Obviously, for an advertiser, these clicks are useless as they don't result in conversions, and Google cracks down on the fraudulent parties. Google themselves give a disclaimer that you can't click on your own ads. There's a bunch of stuff that you can't do, that if done will lead to blacklisting. For example, you can't mention any incentives on your site for clicking on the ads. You can't put ads on sites with pornographic content either.

There have been a lot of controversies about Google and its banning policies, with lots of sites being blacklisted from

Granting access will allow the website to do the following:

- View your name, country, and email address
- Access your reports and earnings data
- Manage your account on your behalf

The website will **not** be able to do the following.

- View or change your payment details or history

Policies

AdSense applicants must agree to adhere to AdSense program policies (details)

- ☐ I agree that I will not click on the Google ads I'm serving through AdSense.
- ☐ I will not place ads on sites that include incentives to click on ads.
- ☐ I agree that I can receive checks made out to the payee name I have listed above.
- ☐ I will not place ads on sites that include pornographic content.
- ☐ I certify that I have read the [AdSense Program Policies](#).

Login Information

Email address:

Password:

Re-enter password:

• 7 or more characters using both digits and letters.

Submit Information

[AdSense Blog](#) - [AdSense Forum](#) - [Privacy Policy](#) - [Terms & Conditions](#) - [Program Policies](#)

Be careful or be banned

AdSense for seemingly no reason whatsoever, and others getting away scot-free.

2.7 Payments

So how much can you make with AdSense? Well, basically, the amount you make is entirely dependant on how many people visit your site; the more the visitors, the greater the chance that they will see the ads and, therefore, click them. There are reports of cyber-café owners in Rajasthan making up to \$1,500 a month! High-value keywords obviously pay a higher amount per click, but that also means that the content you serve has to be related to those keywords. For example, finance-related content usually serves high-value keywords, i.e. financial content related AdSense ads usually pay more than say cricket-related ads. However, some ads can pay really low (as low as a cent per click) as well. The thumb rule remains, though, that the more the number of visitors

to your site, the more money you can make.

As we mentioned before however, there are certain aberrations to the rosy picture, and cases have been reported of people's accounts being blacklisted for no fathomable reason. However, if you're clean, and of course, popular, you can be assured of some extra monthly pocket money!

Google Spreadsheets

3.1 Introduction

Google Docs and Spreadsheets are part of Google's attempt to enter the offline office applications domain. The future through Google's eyes is clear—it would like to see every PC only need an OS, with the rest of the applications online, accessible as and when needed. Needless to say, a broadband connection forms the backbone of this future. Since Google's online services are free, the only expenses involved are for Net access.

Also, since most users of offline office packages rarely use more than 10 per cent of the package's functionality, the availability of such free services will ensure that a significant part of the current user base will refrain from investing in office application in the future (unless they are also freely available) and stick to a broadband Net connection—the costs of which are also steadily falling. Documents created on these online services can be stored online, so you need not invest in local storage, making the need of large hard disks redundant, especially for office tasks/business PCs. The future of office PCs therefore looks pretty slim, since only a thin client will be needed.

Google Spreadsheets, unlike Google Docs, is a result of in-house R&D. It's not fair to compare its capabilities with those of full blown office packages. There are limitations because the online interface is miniscule, compared to the file size of the offline versions, and the response of the online application is influenced by the width of your broadband connection. But, there are a few advantages. It is much easier to collaborate using an online document, and worries about data corruption, storage and transferability are addressed, since the data is always available online, and we'll assume that Google's storage facilities are rugged and redundant.

3.2 Using Google Spreadsheets

3.2.1 Logging in

Before you can use Google Spreadsheets, you need to sign up for a Google account. If you already have a Gmail account you can add Google Spreadsheets to your list of services by accessing the “all my services” link on the top left of the mailbox.



The Staging area

Once you are logged into the account, you are presented with a staging area of sorts. This page is the same for Google Docs and Spreadsheets. This is the place where a record of the documents and spreadsheets you have worked on in the last 30 days is maintained. If it is the first time you logged in, this page will be empty. To start a new spreadsheet, click on the “New spreadsheet” link. This will cause a script file which is the interface to be loaded. Once loaded, you are presented with the familiar spreadsheet grid. Continuing the clean look of all Google services, Google Spreadsheets also avoids unnecessary frills and ads. It is indeed a mystery as to how Google sustains itself since the mandatory ads seen on most other sites are conspicuously absent here.

The Staging Area is in many respects similar to the Gmail mailbox. Here the spread sheets can be tagged, a process similar to Labeling. Once this is done, all spreadsheets with the same tag can be selectively viewed by clicking on the tag link. Spreadsheets which are no longer active can be archived to reduce clutter on this page. The archived spreadsheets can be

viewed with the “View All” link at the top right, a system reminiscent of the “All Email” link in Gmail. Spreadsheets can also be deleted, in which case they end up in the trash and can be retrieved by using the “Browse Docs and Spreadsheets link” at the top right. Information regarding the storage capacity is not readily available.

3.2.2 Adding Content

One of the first things you notice is that every response is delayed. While you can type out a long sentence in a cell, there is a small delay before it appears on the spreadsheet. And every other activity takes longer than that.

The moment you complete the sentence and move to the next cell, you will notice that the row height is automatically adjusted to accommodate the sentence, and a small “Updating” tool tip flashes briefly, and small message pops up at the bottom reminding you that the spreadsheet is not saved, and offering to start Autosaving. If you choose to Start Autosaving, a prompt asking for a file name appears. From then on the file is autosaved, every time any change is made. The price of the freedom from having to worry about lost data is the increased response time the autosaving causes.

In case you type in a long series of numbers or words without spaces, you will see that the content does not spillover into the next cell, but remains limited by the cell boundary. Adjacent cells in a row can be merged effortlessly using the Merge across button on the toolbar. This action can be undone just as easily. Unfortunately merging cells in a column is not supported. Increasing column or row size is easily accomplished; as is copy, cut and paste which can also be done with the keyboard shortcuts. If you would prefer the row height to remain the same irrespective of the content entered, you can disable the Word Wrap feature from the toolbar.

3.2.3 Content Formatting

The top bar of the spreadsheet contains all the toolbar buttons associated with formatting. The capabilities in this regard are quite similar to those offered by office packages.

All the popular effects, like bold, italics, underline, alignment, font size etc are offered. Adding and deleting



Use the Align options...



...and the Format options in your sheet

columns and rows can be done by using the Insert and Delete buttons in the same toolbar.

3.2.4 Data Operations

Besides the basic mathematical operations, Google

Spreadsheets supports

a host of formulae which can be accessed under the Formulas tab. The commonly used functions are already listed to the right of the bar, clicking on the “More” link opens a pop up containing all the supported formula. If the pop up obscures the cell being modified, it can be dragged to a more convenient location. Placing the cursor over a formula displays the syntax in the space below, and clicking on it causes the formula to be entered in the cell.

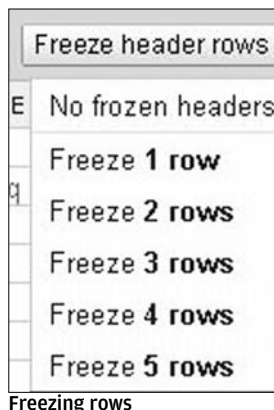


Sort data easily using the Sort toolbar

The Sort tab offers the sole Data Manipulation capability of Google Spreadsheets. Here you can sort the spreadsheet in ascending or descending order based on the content of the column of the selected cell (this is displayed at the right of the toolbar). If things do not go as planned, use the [Ctrl] + [Z] combination to undo the changes.

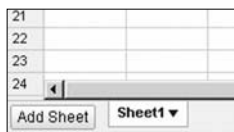
Here you will also find the “Freeze Header Row” button which can freeze the selected number of rows, making scrolling the sheet much easier.

At the bottom of the sheet you can see the Add Sheet button which can be used for just that. Google states that “each spreadsheet can be up to 10,000 rows, or up to 256 columns, or up to 50,000 cells, or up to 20 sheets—whichever limit is reached first.”



Freezing rows

The interface allows the use of the usual shortcut keys like [Ctrl] + [C], [Ctrl] + [V], etc. A range of cells can be selected by dragging the mouse as with offline applications.



Adding new sheets

3.2.5 Collaboration

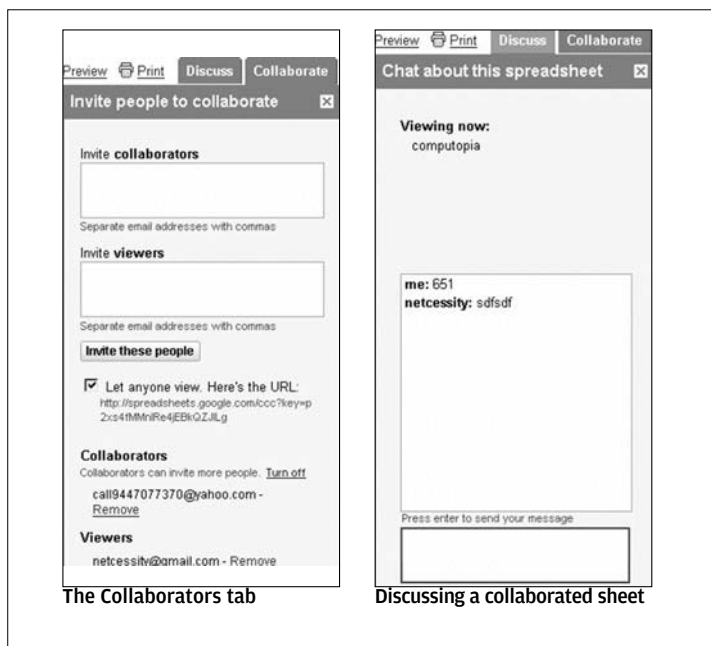
The true power of Google Spreadsheets is enhanced collaboration—where a spreadsheet can be maintained by more than one author. To start off, you click on the Collaborate tab. Here you can enter the e-mail ID of the people you would like to invite to collaborate on the spreadsheet. Viewers, unlike Collaborators, cannot modify content but can view the sheet. An e-mail is sent to the e-mail IDs specified, informing them about your request.

To collaborate or view, the people need to use their Google IDs, or create one if they do not have one. By default, Collaborators can invite others without your knowledge. This can be disabled if needed under the same tab. Selecting the “Let Anyone View” box allows any person with a Google ID also to view your spreadsheet, the URL of the spreadsheet is provided immediately. The need for a Google ID makes the “Let Anyone View” claim ring hollow.

Collaboration would be meaningless without communication.

This need is fulfilled under the Discuss tab. An IM box allows other collaborators and viewers to exchange messages.

3.2.6 Saving, Printing, Exporting, Importing



The spreadsheet can be saved using the save button on the top left. This will cause it to be stored online and show up in the Google Spreadsheets Staging Area. To print the sheet, use the print link to the top right, while the adjacent preview link offers a print preview. As can be concluded, all viewers and collaborators can export or print the spreadsheet.

If you would like to use the Google Spreadsheets offline, you need to export it using the File Button on the top right. Here you can choose the format to save it in—MS Excel, Open Document Spreadsheet, PDF, HTML, etc., are some of the formats supported. Google Spreadsheets also supports importing spreadsheets in the

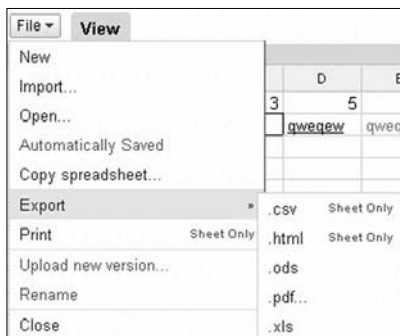
supported formats, from your computer. Given the limitation of Google Spreadsheets, don't expect it to handle an MS Excel sheet that contains advanced features such as pivot tables. Simple spreadsheets, however, are handled without problems.

3.3 Concluding Remarks

Google Spreadsheets will find more takers as broadband penetration increases, and stricter software anti-piracy measures are enforced. Faced with the choice of shelling out close to the cost of a PC to acquire a commercial license for an OS and an office suite, people should soon start accepting free OSes and tools like Google

Spreadsheets. It also helps that Google Spreadsheets offers most of the frequently used functions of offline office packages. The ability to collaborate is an added feature which cannot be replicated offline, and will become more important as people living farther apart are brought together through the Internet.

The size limitation can be expected to be liberalized, and the capabilities enhanced as the product matures. Overall, Google Spreadsheets is a must try for everyone, especially small businesses and people who need to collaborate across the country, or globe.



Exporting your sheet

Google Docs

First off, “Docs” as mentioned above is not the result of Serious SMS Syndrome—the service is actually called “Google Docs,” and not “Google Documents”!

4.1 Introduction

As already explained in the previous chapter on Google Spreadsheets (GS), Google Docs (GD) is part of Google’s strategy to replace offline office applications with their online counterparts.

Besides the functionality of GS, in terms of creating, storing, importing, and exporting documents, GD offers a few additional features—like the ability to incorporate RSS feeds, the ability to track revisions, and the ability to publish a document to your blog. A major deficiency is the absence of an integrated IM client, which would probably be considered essential for collaborative projects.

GD is the result of Google’s acquisition of Upstartle, a company that created Writely—a Web-based word processor. After the acquisition, Writely was renamed “Google Docs.”

4.2 Using GD

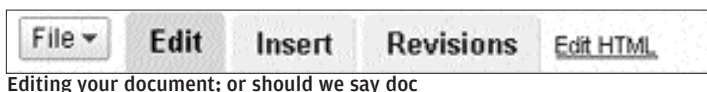
4.2.1 Logging In

You need a Google or Gmail ID to be able to use GD. If you are a Gmail user, you can add the GD service from the “All my Services” link at the top left of the Gmail mailbox page. Signing in takes you to the Google Spreadsheets and Docs staging area. This area, as described in the previous chapter, is a place where a record of all the documents you have been working on is maintained. You can also see the status of each of the documents—

like whether they have been published, who are the viewers and collaborators, etc.

4.2.2 Creating Documents

To start a new document, click on the New Document Link. The script file that forms the interface will take a few moments (over a broadband connection) to load. Once loaded, the similarities



with GS are readily apparent. The toolbar in the Edit Tab is the same except for a few changes: while entering text, as in the case with GS, the response is delayed, but is not as conspicuous.

The toolbar contains all common formatting options. Applying bolding, italicisation, underlining, changing of fonts, numbering, paragraph alignment, etc. are all accomplished by mouse clicks.

The Style drop-down list contains additional options in the form of a few pre-configured paragraph styles, line spacing, and text positioning such as subscript and superscript. The Change drop-down can be used to manage bookmarks. Bookmarks, in conjunction with links, can be used to quickly jump to selected points in a document.



Choose Style options

To add a bookmark at a point, position the cursor there and click on the Manage Bookmark link. You should add a meaningful name for a bookmark to avoid confusion when configuring a link to it. The text can be spell-checked using the link at the bottom right.

A glitch here is the inability to continue entering ordinary text after entering a quote. To elaborate: to enter a quote, you click on the quote (") button on the toolbar. This will create a box outlined by dashes, in which quoted text is entered. In GD, after you have added a quote, there is no way to exit the quote box, and all new text is included in the quote box. You cannot add non-quoted text after the quote box since the cursor will not budge outside it. To bypass this, it is better to type out the entire document and then select and apply quotes to the relevant text.

An essential feature of any word processor is the ability to set margins; this, sadly, is lacking in GD.

4.2.3 Inserting Additional Content

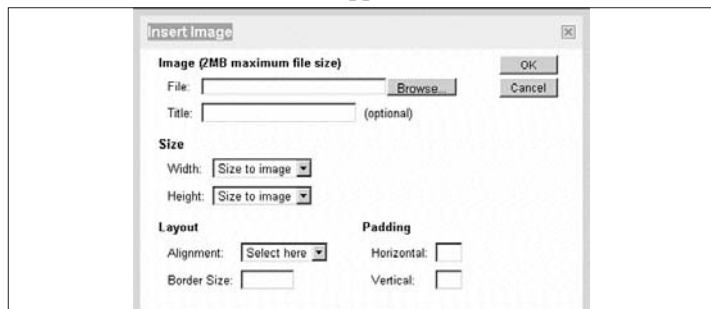


The familiar Insert tab will help you add components into your doc

The Insert tab allows inclusion of non-textual content into the document. These can be images, links, tables, bookmarks, separators, comments, and special characters. Clicking on the respective link opens a pop-up that offers instructions on how to proceed.

Inserting Images

The supported image file formats are not mentioned, but JPEG, BMP, GIF, and PNG files are supported, while TIFF files are not.

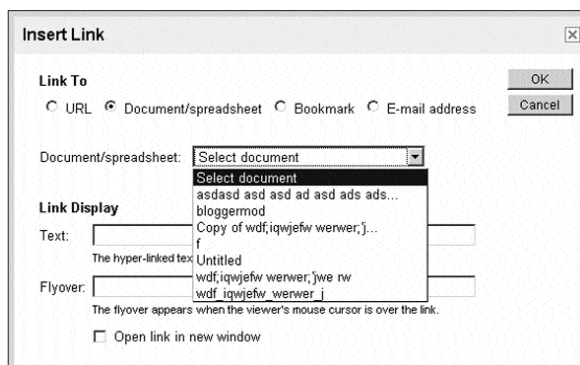


Inserting an image into your doc

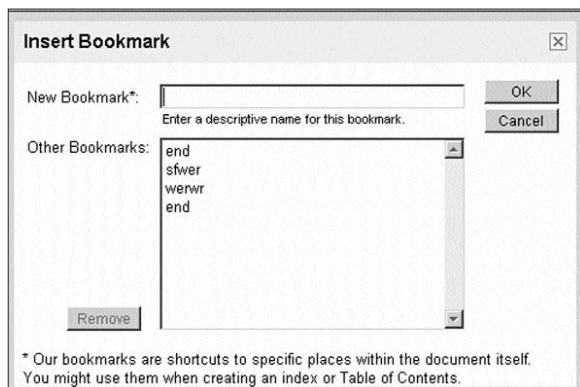
Image file size is limited to a generous 2 MB. Parameters such as dimensions, layout, and padding can be changed.

Inserting Links / Bookmarks

A Link can be used to connect to a URL on the Net or a bookmark on the same document, or to create a “mailto” address containing an e-mail ID. Additionally, you can also link it to a document or Spreadsheet you are collaborator or viewer of. All such shared documents are shown in the drop-down list that appears on selecting “Document / Spreadsheet”. It is worth remembering that only



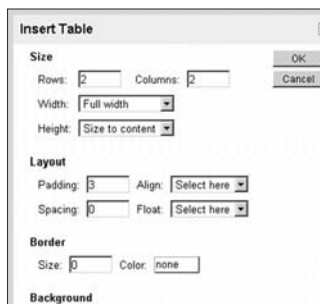
Inserting a link into a doc



Inserting a Bookmark

links that connect to URLs or e-mail IDs appear in non-HTML formats when the document is saved.

Bookmarks can be created using the Bookmarks link on the toolbar. Using Bookmarks and Links, a navigable Table of Contents can be created.



Inserting tables

Inserting Tables

You can choose the Rows and Columns of a table, besides its colour, borders, and other features.

Inserting Special Characters

If you would like to enter characters not available on the keyboard, use the Special Characters link.

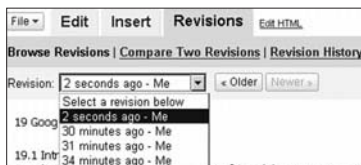
One annoying feature is that after the object has been inserted, the Insert tab is exited. So if you need to insert more than one object, you'll need to return to the Insert tab.



Using Special Characters

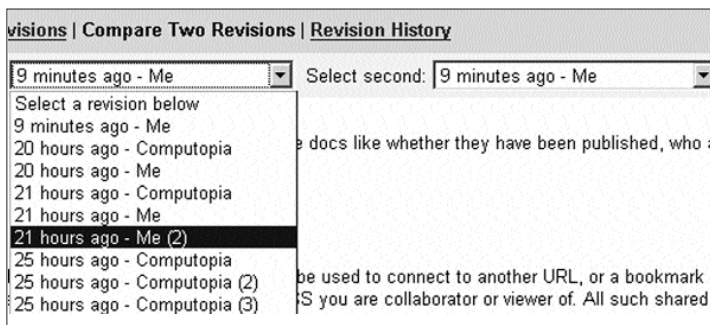
4.2.4 Version Control

Comparing revisions is possible under the Revisions tab. Here you can choose to browse the different versions of the document by choosing the relevant version from the drop-down box. The "Revert to this Version" button at the top right allows you to fall back to the previous document, undoing all

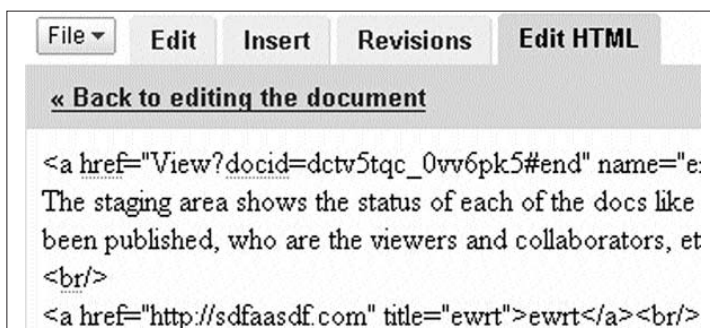


Choosing revisions

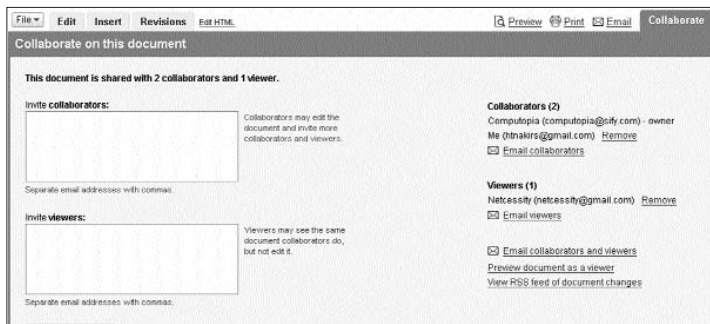
changes since. This, though, only adds one more listing to the Previous Versions drop-down, and doesn't erase the later versions.



Comparing two revisions



Editing HTML tab



Collaborate html tab

You can also compare two versions of the document under the “Compare Two Revisions” link. This presents two drop-down lists from where you can choose the versions.

Finally, a “Revision History” link presents a listing of the Time, and the Author who modified the document. Since the work of each author is differently coloured, they can be easily differentiated.

4.2.5 Additional Tweaking

The Edit HTML tab allows you to modify the HTML code underlying every document. This could be used by people with the relevant knowledge to add effects not provided by the interface—like the ability to merge adjacent cells of a table, or use a text size not on offer.

4.2.6 Collaboration

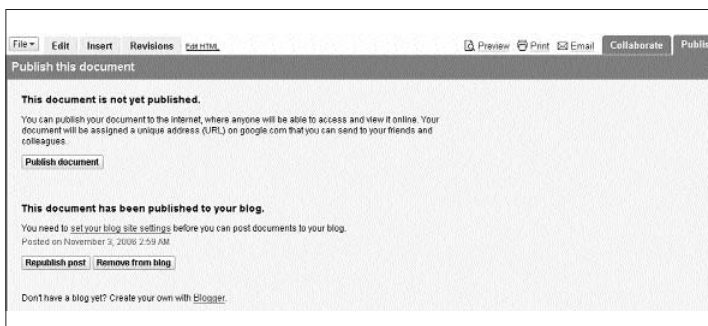
To add viewers or other editors, use the Collaborators tab. Here, you can add collaborators by their e-mail addresses. Clicking on the “Invite these people” button doesn’t send any e-mails to the invitees: it only adds their names to the viewers / collaborators list. A prompt requesting permission to send an invitational e-mail comes up after the “Invite these People” button is pressed. The e-mail body can be customised before it is sent; the URL to the document is sent with the invitation. Invitees need to be members of Google Docs to be able to view or collaborate.

One glaring omission in comparison with GS is the lack of an IM client. Without the ability to exchange instant messages, collaboration may not be as effective. You can e-mail contributors or visitors using the E-mail link.

GD supports RSS and feeds for every modification of the document to be accessed. The “View RSS feed of Document Changes” allows viewers and collaborators to be updated every time the document is changed—without having to visit the site. Further RSS configuration is discussed in §4.4.

4.2.7 Publishing

If you would prefer to allow unrestricted viewing of the document, use the Publish tab. Under this tab, the Publish Document button puts the document online. Once the document is published, any person can view it at the URL provided alongside. But since you cannot choose the URL, and the automatically generated URL will invariably contain randomly-generated gibberish, it would not be possible to memorise it or manually type out the URL when sharing it with others. This just isn't user-friendly!



Publish your document

If any changes have been made, the “Republish document” button will update the online version. Any time you feel the document isn't perfect, publishing can be stopped by clicking on the “Stop Publishing” button. This will cause the document to be taken offline.

Documents can be published to your blog. Before that can be achieved, you need to enter the Blog settings under the “Set your Blog Site Settings” link under the Publish Tab. Some blog



Settings for a blog site

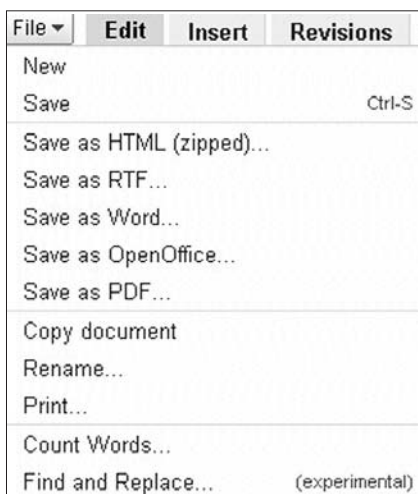
hosts such as Blogger and Wordpress are already configured, leaving you with the need to only enter a username, password, and blog title. You can test if the configuration is correct. If it is, interestingly, you get the message, “You can post to this blog from WRITELY.” Hmm.

If your blog host is not in the list, you need to select the “My Own Server/Custom” option and enter the advanced settings, like the API and the complete URL in addition to the username, password and blog title. Some of the popular APIs, like those used in Wordpress, TypePad and Drupal, are presented when clicking on the “Click here for yours” link, which makes the configuration easier. If the document changes and you would like to update the blog, use “Republish Post”. To take down the document from the blog, use the “Remove from blog” button.

4.2.8 Saving, Exporting, Importing

Unlike GS, which explicitly asks for permission to start auto-saving, the auto-saving feature in GD does its job silently without seeking permission. A brief “saving” tool-tip on the top right is all you see. There is no way to disable the auto-saving feature, and sometimes the delay caused by the auto-save—especially when dealing with large documents—can be annoying.

The Save button is on the top left of the editing area. On saving, surprisingly, there is no prompt asking for a file name. The first line of the document is automatically taken as the name. If you would like



Saving your file

to rename the file, you can use the File button on the top left. Saving the document by using the Save button only saves an online copy, accessible from the Docs and Spreadsheets staging area. To use the document offline, it needs to be saved using the File menu at the top left.

Supported file formats include MS Word, OpenOffice Document, and PDF. Under the File menu, you will also see the Find and Replace link. This is in an experimental phase, and as the pop-up reminds you, the results cannot be undone. The Copy Document link will create a copy of the document with a “Copy of” prefixed to the original file name. The word count function is also accessible from the File Menu.

If you would like to use GD to continue work on any document existing offline, it can be uploaded to GD using the Upload link in the Staging Area. To print a document, use the Print Link; the Preview link offers a Print Preview.

4.3 A Note on File Sizes

Information regarding the size limits of the document is conflicting. While the “Insert Image” pop-up states that an image can be up to 2 MB, the maximum size of a document that can be uploaded from a local disk is 500 KB. In any case, GD will refuse to save documents that exceed “an HTML file size of 512 KB”. This would mean that internally, the files are stored in HTML format, and such files cannot exceed 512 KB excluding images. Since only image links, and not the image themselves, are part of HTML code, the image file sizes do not add to the code size.

4.4 Configuring GD

Under Settings, accessible from the staging area, an additional GD options can be configured. The user's name that will be visible to collaborators of a document can be changed under the Documents tab. Under the RSS feeds tab, the behaviour of the RSS feed for all documents can be changed.

If you would like to enable universal access to the RSS feed of the document, it can be done by clicking on the "Change Settings" link under the "Private Documents in Public Feeds" title. By allowing public access to feeds, search engines can find your feeds and allow people to subscribe to them. Though people can read the feed, to be able to access the document they need to be viewers or collaborators. This page also lists the links that can be used to access the feeds related to changes in all Active Documents and all documents having a certain tag. Each tag has its own feed, which will carry the updates of all documents sharing that tag. The link to access individual document feeds is available from the Collaborate tab of each document.

4.5 Concluding Remarks

GD is an adequately capable word-processing package that packs in most of the features that laypeople would need. But a few oversights deny it a wholehearted recommendation. As far as its role as a collaboration tool is concerned, the absence of a chat system casts a huge question-mark on its usability. Overall, GD can be best described as work in progress.

For Your Site

If you're a business with a Web presence, you'll find the collection of Google services here interesting and perhaps useful—Google Analytics, Google Co-op, and Google Base. These services are very different from each other—there really is no linking factor, and we've grouped them here under one chapter because you'd use them if you have (or, in the case of Google Base, even want to have) a Web presence.

5.1 Google Analytics

Analytics is defined as the science of logical analysis. The Web Analytics Association defines “Web Analytics” as “the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of Internet data for the purposes of understanding and optimising Web usage.”

Web sites are hosted on servers that keep a track of the traffic in the form of logs. The information logged varies, but usually, information like visitor IP, browser, duration of visit, link which brought visitor to the site, where the visitor headed to from the site, etc. can be logged. These logs contain a wealth of information, and identifying patterns and trends helps improve sites and eventually bottom-lines—it is crucial for any online business. While logs themselves can offer information, to be able to put them in a form that enhances comprehension is also important. Server logs can be limited by the parameters they can record or some Web site hosts just do not log all the parameters. So, the need for additional information can be satisfied by having additional code inserted in the Web page, which reports the visitor data to another server—usually with a Web analytics firm. Such firms also provide the analytical tools needed to make sense of the collected data—for a price.

About Google Analytics

Google Analytics (GA) is the result of Google's acquisition of Urchin software—a Web analytics company. While at the time of acquisition, Urchin offered its services for a cost, post-acquisition, the fees were quickly reduced and finally done away with. As is the case with a few other Google services, initially, GA was by invitation only, but now anyone can use it for free—as long as there are less than 50 lakh visitors every month. More popular Web sites need to sign up for Google AdWords to use GA.

Google's move into this market is seen as a path-breaking one, since free access to analytics tools reduced the dependence of Web sites on firms offering the service. This allowed small and medium sized businesses to discover for themselves the performance of their ad campaigns on different parameters, which ultimately helps them streamline their online marketing practices. Google's move to free up GA was probably prompted by the need to increase the attractiveness of its AdWords programme, which is its lifeline. By integrating AdWords into GA, Google enabled those who used AdWords to make improvements to their strategies based on the data presented by GA. Ad submitters can identify which ads are more effective, which sites are bringing in the most people, what words visitors are searching for on the site, and more. Armed with this information they can fine-tune their online advertising strategies. (It needs to be mentioned here that GA is not limited to tracking Google AdWords performance only.)

```
<script src="http://www.google-analytics.com/urchin.js" type="text/javascript">
</script>
<script type="text/javascript">
  uacct = "UA-909969-1";
  urchinTracker();
</script>
```

All it takes is a few lines of code

Using GA

To be able to put GA to any use, you need to have a Web site; a little knowledge of HTML helps. On signing into GA with a Google or Gmail ID, you are asked for a Web site URL you wish to track. The

free version of GA allows 50 tracking profiles, and since reports are generated per profile, it is best to allocate one profile to a specific URL. You are then provided with a small code snippet that needs to be inserted into every Web page that you wish to track—to emphasise, the code should be on *every* page you wish to track. Inserting the code into the first page of the site will not track all the pages in it.

There is no limit to the number of Web pages that can be tracked; the page view limit (in the case of free users) is the only limiting factor. More sites can be added by using the “Add Web site Profile” link. Every profile has a different code that has to be inserted in the Web page. So it is crucial that the code be inserted in the Web page of the same profile. That’s it. GA will start generating reports within 24 hours of the insertion of the code.

The screenshot shows the Google Analytics 'Analytics Settings' page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Analytics Settings', 'View Reports', and a dropdown to 'Click to select Website Profile'. Below this, a message states: 'Waiting for data: gs57review.awardspace.com. Analytics has been successfully installed and data is being gathered now.' The main heading is 'Analytics Settings - gs57review.awardspace.com (Edit Analytics Account)'. Below the heading, it says: 'From this page you can manage your website profiles, create custom or predefined filters, and control access to your Analytics reports.'

The 'Website Profiles' section features a table with the following data:

Name	Reports	Settings	Delete	Status
1. gs57review.awardspace.com	View Reports	Edit	Delete	Waiting for Data - Check Status Conversion Goals (0)

Below the table, there's a note: 'To track another website with Analytics, click the "Add Website Profile" link.'

The 'Access Manager' section shows 'Number of Users: 2' and a link to 'Learn more'. The 'Filter Manager' section shows 'Number of Filters: 0' and a link to 'Learn more'.

The Google Analytics home page

The code that you copied into your site accesses a JavaScript file on the Google server. All the details are collected by the script and sent back to the server. The data and their graphical representation details can be viewed on the GA site.

Since GA is useful to many people, many users should be able to access it. Users can be added from the “Access Manager” link on the

Create New User For Access
Enter user information below to grant access to reports and report settings, and optionally grant Account Ad

Enter user information

Email address: (Must be a Google Account. [Learn more](#))

Last Name:

First Name:

Access type:

Allow access to

Available Website Profiles

gs57review.awardspace.com

Add >

< Remove

Selected Website

Please note that Account Administrators have access to **all** reports and profiles in your account.

Adding a GA user

main page. The users can be permitted only to view reports, or given Administrative rights. Users need Google IDs to access the site.

To distill information collection further, users can add filters by using the Filter Manager link on the main page. Filters can be used among other things, to track visitors from a particular IP address, or to overlook visitors from a particular IP, or only visitors of a certain nationality can be tracked. All these and more is possible by applying filters.

Create New Filter

Enter Filter Information

Filter Name:

Filter Type:

Exclude all traffic from a domain
Exclude all traffic from an IP address
Include only traffic to a subdirectory

Custom filter

☐ Uppercase
☐ Search and Replace
☐ Lookup Table
☐ Advanced

Filter Field:

Filter Pattern: [What do the spec](#)

Case Sensitive: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Apply Filter to Website Profiles

Available Website Profiles

gs57review.awardspace.com

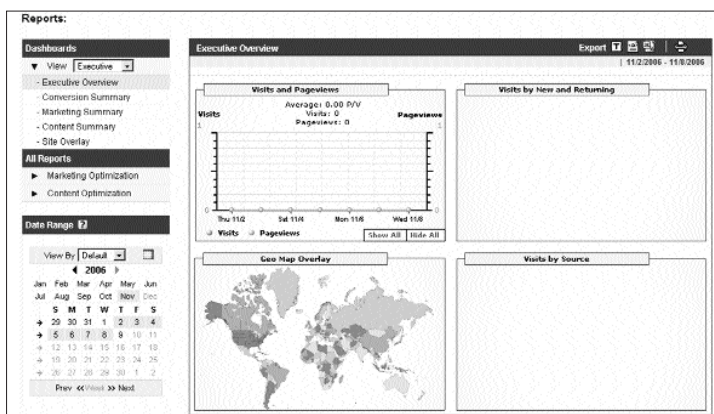
Add >

Using the Filter Manager

An extensive help system offers a lot of information not only about using GA but also about making sense of the information provided. There are case studies and reports from industry experts on how, by using GA, tangible results can be obtained.

Reporting

GA offers about 80 ready-made reporting templates in all. For easy access a “dashboard” offers three predefined profiles with rele-



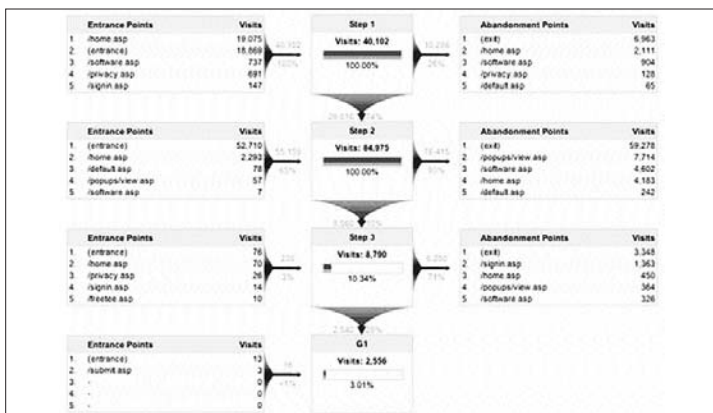
Viewing reports

vant reports under each profile. The categories are executive, marketer and webmaster. Under the All Reports heading, all reports are available under two categories : Marketing Optimisation and Content Optimisation.

The emphasis at GA is pictorial representation, since comprehension is easier this way. Rather than make users wade through a table of figures, they are presented with charts and bar graphs so that the information is easily digestible. Every report comes with a small description regarding what it is about, which makes the need of “experts” redundant. As already mentioned there are over 80 reports waiting to be hunched over. It is indeed statistician wonderland. Besides the 80 reports, “Advanced Visitor Segmentation” allows viewing visitors across 18 parameters, such

as nationality, browser, and operating system. Data can be exported to other formats like CSV which can be used in other applications like MS Excel, or XML or Tab Separated Value.

Certain reports are organised in such a way that arriving at conclusions is easy. For example the problem any ecommerce site faces is the behaviour of visitors who commence the process of buying an item and then exit midway. GA has a feature called



Funnel vision?

Funnel Visualisation wherein users can track all pages of an online shopping cart. It is much easier to identify which step is a bottleneck when the report is structured in the form of a funnel with the first part of the shopping process at the top and the completed sales page at the bottom.

The flow of traffic will immediately reveal which step is the hurdle. In another nifty tool, called Site Overlay, a



Use Site Overlay to better understand your site

page on the site is superimposed with the gathered data about the clicks on each link on the page. This makes it much easier to identify performing links, and figuring out reasons behind it.

GA presents geographical data in the simplest way possible—on an atlas. This makes it easy to see the visitors' physical location, and use that information to better target those locations giving the most sales. Google calls this “Geotargeting.”



For the webmaster, information about the browsing environment will allow modifying the site to suit the majority of customers. For example, if reports suggest that only 5 per cent of visitors are using Flash-enabled browsers, the webmaster can decrease Flash content to allow the majority of the users to experience to the fullest what the site has to offer. (Just by the way, all charts in GA are Flash-based.)

For the Executive, nothing is as important as knowing where all the advertising budget is being utilised and whether it is generating returns. With reports that track Return on Investment on different types of marketing campaigns, GA can allow the executive to decide the proportion of the budget allocation across all marketing efforts.

Limitations

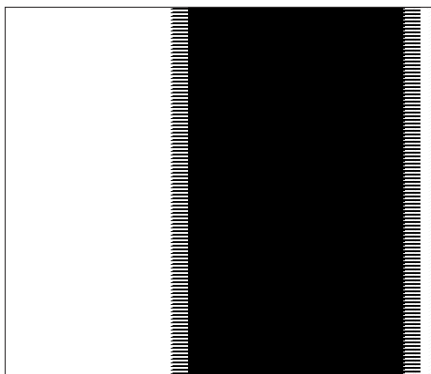
Since the data collection requires the running of a script, GA is susceptible to browser modification. So if users to the site are using JavaScript-disabled browsers, the script will not be loaded. Ad blockers can be configured to block data from specific ad sites, including google-analytics.com. Users using these applications can browse the site and yet not leave a trace.

Concluding Remarks

The ability to track the whole gamut of marketing efforts at one end, and to generate relevant reports to address the needs of different levels of employees at the other end makes GA an irreplaceable tool for any online business. The use of Flash ads makes saving the graphs for offline access difficult.

5.2 Google Base

Google Base is one of the lesser-understood tools in Google's services stable. Even experienced users find themselves somewhat confused about what Google Base is. However, understanding and effectively using Google Base is one of those little things that help in



The Google Base home page

increasing your search engine rankings. According to Google, "...based on your items' relevance, users may find them in their results for searches on Froogle, Google Maps and even our main Google Web search."

So what is Google Base? Rather than wait for Google to automatically crawl your Web site and index it, Google Base enables users to manually submit content they want included in Google's indexing services and that will show up in search results for queries. In effect it can act as an ad hoc hosting service for people without Web sites and who want to house their material in a centralised location.

As with other services, you will need a Google account to use the service. Once you are signed in, go to the Base home page (www.google.com/base/).

There are three ways you can post items to Google Base: one item at a time if you have less than 10 items, via Bulk Upload, or by using the Google Base API (Application Programming Interface), which can be used to program automatic publishing to Google Base. Visit the site to learn more about Bulk Upload and

using the API. Here, we will explore using Google Base using the one-at-a-time option.

To post a single item, users can either choose an existing item type or create a new item type. The decision about whether to fit in your items within the existing types or creating a new type will depend on what type of content you are uploading. In fact, creating a unique type (or category as it's often called) in the hope of making your content stand out does not seem to have any special effect. The trick is to apply the correct types and accurate attributes (explained further).

Google Post an item

Choose an existing item type:

OR

Create your own item type:

Events and Activities
Housing
Jobs
News and Articles
Personal
Podcasts
Products
Recipes
Reference Articles
Reviews
Services
Travel Packages
Vehicles
Wanted Ads

What's the difference between item types?
Based on the item types you choose, we'll recommend certain details to fill out. Also, some types get listed in certain Google indices. For example, if you post a product, it will show up for relevant queries in Google searches.
[Learn more](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) [Terms of Service](#) [Program Policies](#) [Google Home](#)

©2008 Google

Choose an Item Category (type)

Click the Next button after choosing the required type to get the posting form. In our example, we have chosen the item type as Vehicle, so the details required are structured around additional descriptions that will qualify the Vehicle. These details are what are known as attributes. The Title field should be used to enter details about the item, much like the headline. This should be clear and concise, as search engines will improve the relevance of your posting when accurate descriptions are used. The initial set of pre-defined attributes capture more details about the Vehicle with the option to add further attributes that you think are relevant. In our example, we have added one more attribute called Model. On the right, you can also upload 20 MB worth of images related to the post, or enter a URL where the images are available.

Further down you can also add HTML content that is relevant to your post (partially shown), specify contact and e-mail address details, specify payment options and delivery locations, and specify any AdWords settings (not shown).

You can click the Preview button to see how it will look when posted, or save it as a draft. Once you are satisfied with the details you can click the Publish button to post it to Google Base. Your Google Base Entry will now look like the image shown on the right.

Similarly you can use the Bulk Upload and API option to automate the posting of multiple items to Google Base. All the items that are posted can be viewed and managed in the My Items console of Google Base. To provide more information about yourself, your store, or your company, you can use the Settings tab. You can also use the console to add new items.

Google Base allows you a maximum of 30 days before the item expires. During this time the item will be searchable through Web Search, Froogle (based on item type), and even Google Maps. The

The screenshot shows a Google Base entry for a 'Vintage 1960s Volkswagen Beetle'. The entry is titled 'Vintage 1960s Volkswagen Beetle' and is posted on Nov 8, 2008 at 9:52pm PST. It is categorized under 'digit magazine's items > Vehicles'. The details section lists the price as \$10,000.00 per item (negotiable), quantity as 1, year as 1963, make as Volkswagen, vehicle type as Car, condition as Used, and model as Beetle. The location and delivery information shows 'Domestic, India' with a map of India. The description section contains the text 'This is a Digit Magazine tutorial post to understand the working of a Google Base entry.' The contact information shows the name as 'digit magazine' and the payment method as 'Cash, Check'. The entry is set to expire in 30 days.

Google [digit magazine's items > Vehicles](#) [adwords@gmail.com](#) | [My Items](#) | [My Account](#) | [Help](#) | [Sign out](#)

Vintage 1960s Volkswagen Beetle
Posted on Nov 8, 2008 9:52pm PST - [Contact the poster](#) - [All items by digit magazine](#) - [Report bad item](#)

Details

Price: \$10,000.00 per item (negotiable)
Quantity: 1
Year: 1963
Make: Volkswagen
Vehicle type: Car
Condition: Used
Model: Beetle

Location and delivery
Domestic, India

[View Larger Map](#)

Description

This is a Digit Magazine tutorial post to understand the working of a Google Base entry.

Contact
Name: digit magazine
Contact the poster

Payment
I accept: Cash, Check

This item will expire in 30 days

A Google Base Entry

My Items console will give you feedback on the number of impressions, clicks, and page views for each item, enabling you to decide on how to focus your content in the future.

The screenshot displays the Google My Items console. At the top, there's a search bar and navigation links. Below, a table lists active items. The first item is 'Vintage 1960s Volkswagen Beetle', categorized as 'Vehicles', with a status of 'Published and searchable'. It shows 0 impressions, 0 clicks, and 0 page views. Below the table, there's a section to 'Post your item' with two options: 'Choose an existing item type' and 'Create your own item type'. At the bottom, there are links for 'Google Base Home', 'Privacy Policy', 'Terms of Service', 'Program Policies', and 'Google Home'.

My Items Console

5.3 Google Co-Op

Google Co-op is a service platform that enables content providers to customise the Web search experience for both their own Web site as well as general Google searches. There are three services that are currently part of Google Co-op: Topics, Subscribed Links, and Custom Search Engine. Each of these is explored in greater detail below.

5.3.1 Topics

Topics are groups of pre-defined structured labels that are applied to Web sites and Web pages. These are being developed by Google with the help of expert contributors who annotate Web sites based on their usefulness and relevance. There are currently six topics being developed: Health, Destination Guides, Autos, Computers & Video Games, Photography & Video Equipment, and Stereo & Home Theater. When a user searches for information within any

Google

Co-op

Topics

Overview

Current topics

My contributions

My profile

Google Market

Documentation

Discussion group

Support

Destination Guides

Welcome to the Google Co-op page for the Destination Guides topic. You can help improve search around this topic by contributing your expertise. As a contributor, you label websites with the Google Maps while browsing the web, or by [uploading](#) a file with a list of labeled web sites. The sites you label will be given priority in your own search results. If you are deemed a quality contributor, your annotations will begin appearing in the search results of all Google users. [Learn more](#)

The labels for this topic – both those in use and those in development – are listed below. We encourage you to annotate useful and reliable webpages in this topic using the labels below. (Click a label to get its definition.) You can also use the search box below to test out the current version of this topic.

Join in the conversation about this topic at the [Co-op discussion group](#).

Destination Guides labels

Suggested itineraries	Sightseeing	Onna guides	Professional article
Tours & day trips	Museums	Lodging guides	Amateur article
Outdoor activities	Shopping	Maps	
	Nature	Transportation & drives	

Try it out, Singapore

Search

Contributors

1 of 0

World6

Fodor's

Frommer's

Go World Travel Magazine

Google Co-op Topics

Search Results with Topic Labels

Google

Web Images Video News Maps more »

Search history

My Account

Sign out

Search

Advanced Search

Feedback

Web

Results 1 - 10 of about 34,400,000 for singapore (definition) (1.11 seconds)

Refine results for singapore:

Suggested itineraries

Sightseeing

Onna guides

Professional article

Tours & day trips

Museums

Lodging guides

Amateur article

Maple articles

Maps

Transportation & drives

Nature

Uniquely Singapore

The official website for tourist information

Singapore Tourism Board's comprehensive official tourist information site. Attractions, food, entertainment, shopping, culture, festivals & events. ...

www.visitingsingapore.com/ - 10k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Singapore InfoNet

The Singapore Infonet (www.sg) is your first step portal to Singapore. With links to government, Singapore facts and resources, latest news and events. ...

www.sg/ - 2k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Singapore - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Information covering history, geography, politics, economy, demographics and culture

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singapore - 10k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Singapore Government Website

The official website of the Government of Singapore

www.gov.sg/ - 2k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Yahoo! Singapore

Get 10 Toolbar | Make Yahoo! Singapore your home page. Yahoo! Search, Web, Images, Video, Directory, News, Search ...

sg.yahoo.com/ - 10k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Redirect to: www.visitingsingapore.com

Tourist information on Singapore is now located at www.visitingsingapore.com. You'll be automatically redirected to our new URL within 10 seconds. ...

www.visitingsingapore.com/ - 2k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Sponsored Links

Uniquely Singapore

Tourist in Singapore

Via Free Travel Facilities

www.visitingsingapore.com

Singapore InfoNet

Super holiday deal, 4 days at 1777

India's Lowest Price Guaranteed!

MakeMyTrip.com/Singapore

Jobs in Singapore

Top Companies Hiring For Singapore

Upload Your Resume Free Now

MonsterJobs.com

Singapore Hotel Booking

Singapore Hotel Reservations (up to 75% Discount, No Extra Charge!)

AsiaRooms.com

Singapore Jobs

2003 - Job Vacancies

Search & Apply!

JobCity.com

Singapore Travel Info

10Times.com has advice and articles for your trip to Singapore

travel.options.com

Singapore

Quick hotel rates and information

www.visitingsingapore.com

Topic Category Labels

Google

Web Images Video News Maps more »

Search history

My Account

Sign out

Search

Advanced Search

Feedback

Web

Results 1 - 10 of about 284,000 for singapore more sightseeing (0.57 seconds)

Refine results for singapore:

Suggested itineraries

Sightseeing

Onna guides

Professional article

Tours & day trips

Museums

Lodging guides

Amateur article

Maple articles

Maps

Transportation & drives

Nature

Clear refinements

Singapore sightseeing tours - Singapore tours and packages

City discovery.com proposes you Singapore tour, sightseeing day tours when ... of sightseeing tours, attractions and activities by theme or type. ...

www.citydiscovery.com/singapore/index.php - 55k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Singapore Travel Guide - Sightseeing in Singapore: Tour and ...

Sightseeing in Singapore: information, tours, attractions in Singapore. Tips and tools for traveling. InfoTravel.com discounts up to 70% on hotels and ...

www.hoteltel.com/singapore/tour/sightseeing.htm - 42k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Singapore Sightseeing - Singapore Travel Guide - The New York ...

The main island of Singapore is shaped like a tapered diamond. Well-paved roads connect all parts of the island, and Singapore city has an excellent ...

www.visitingsingapore.com/tour/sightseeing.htm - 10k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Singapore Attractions - Singapore hotels and Singapore city guide

Singapore attractions Singapore information and Room Reservations at a Wide Range of Singapore Hotels

www.visitingsingapore.com/cityguide/singapore/attractions.html - 22k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this

Sponsored Links

Uniquely Singapore

Tourist in Singapore

Via Free Travel Facilities

www.visitingsingapore.com

Singapore Sightseeing

Find and book Singapore

tours and activities on Viator

www.viator.com

Singapore tours

Discover Singapore. Book popular sightseeing tours and attractions

www.citydiscovery.com

Refined Search Results using Topic Labels

FAST TRACK

61

of these topics, the results page will display category links that can help the user further refine the results in useful ways.

For example go to the Destination Guides topic at www.google.com/coop/topics/Destination_Guides, and enter any tourist destination in the search box—say Singapore.

Clicking on the search button will bring up the Web search page with an option to use the topic Destination Guide's category labels to refine the search for Singapore.

For example, if you want sightseeing information on Singapore, you can further refine your search results by clicking on the Sightseeing label.

Using topics can enhance your search experience and increase your search efficiency in powerful and interesting ways. You can also participate in the ongoing efforts of labelling the Web by becoming a contributor in your area of expertise. To learn more about contributing to Google Co-op Topics, go to www.google.com/coop/topics/.

5.3.2 Subscribed Links

Subscribed links are an easy way to for visitors to get information about your Web site along with their search results when they use keywords you have designated. You can create your own Subscribed Link as well as subscribe to content included in the Google Subscribed Links Directory.

To create your own Subscribed Link go to www.google.com/coop/subscribedlinks.

Click on the "Create a Subscribed Link" button to start. Click the "Design a Basic Subscribed Link" and enter relevant information in the resulting page for your Subscribed Link. In our example, we will create a Subscribed Link for a fictional Web site called burgerhaven.com. In the "Keywords to trigger on:" field, enter the

Google Subscribed Links

What is a Subscribed Link?

Subscribed Links allow you to add custom search results to Google search for users who trust you. You can display links to your services, provide news and status information updated in near-real-time, answer questions, calculate useful quantities, and more.

What you can do with Subscribed Links

- Create search results specific to your product, service, or expertise.
- Design a basic version in minutes to test how it works. Ideal.
- Build a smarter version using HTML, CSS, or JavaScript. Ideal.
- Include images in your Subscribed Links. Ideal.
- Test and customize links through our tool and get debugging messages. Ideal.
- Include countries and currency indicators as special details. Ideal.

Get started in one of three ways

- Create, preview, and test a simple example.
- Upload your most sophisticated content, news, or RSS feed file.
- Provide dynamic content through HTML, CSS, or JavaScript.

[Create a Subscribed Link](#)

©2008 Google - [Google Home](#) - [About Google](#) - [Privacy Policy](#)

Step 1: Create a Subscribed Link

Google Subscribed Links

Design a Basic Subscribed Link

1. Define a basic Subscribed Link 2. Add a button to your site

Example of how your Subscribed Link would look:

Google

Web Results 1 - 10 of about 100 for **Jumbo Burgers**

Subscribed Link

Head: Jumbo Burgers!
 This Jumbo Burgers with extra eggs.
 Free with delivery - call 123456-7890
 Jumboburgers.com

Keywords to trigger on:

File:

Test line 1:

Test line 2:

Test line 3:

URL:

☐ I have read and agree to the [Terms of Service](#)

Step 2: Define it

Google Subscribed Links

Design a Basic Subscribed Link

1. Define a basic Subscribed Link 2. Add a button to your site

Button code

Add one of the buttons below to your website so that your visitors can subscribe to use your Subscribed Link when they search using Google. If you haven't created a [Google profile](#), please [create one](#) so that your visitors can learn more about you before subscribing. A rough guide to creating your Subscribed Link may eventually be added to our [helpdesk](#), so that all Google users can find your content more easily.

Select which button you'd like to use and paste the code below into the page on your website where you would like the button to appear.

`<script>var _gaq=[['_trackPageview'],['_trackPageview',{url:'http://www.jumboburgers.com'}]];`

Completed!

Click the link button below to complete the creation of your Subscribed Link. You will be taken to your Subscribed Links management page, where you can:

- Edit or delete your Subscribed Links
- View the status of your Subscribed Links
- Test and troubleshoot your Subscribed Links

Step 3: Add a button

Google Subscribed Links

My Subscribed Links

Manage Subscribed Links | [Test and troubleshoot](#) | [Get the code](#)

After you create or upload a Subscribed Link, it may take a few minutes for it to become active. Your Subscribed Links will indicate whether they are **Ready**, **Creating**, or have an **Error**. Your Subscribed Links levels will also indicate the last time they were created.

Basic Subscribed Links

Link	Status	Created	Deleted	Test
Feed HTML Jumbo Burgers	Ready		Delete	Test
Create a new Basic Subscribed Link				

Uploaded Subscribed Links

You currently do not have any uploaded Subscribed Links.

[Upload a new Subscribed Link file](#)

Subscribed Links feeds

You currently do not have any Subscribed Link Feeds.

[Upload a new feed URL](#)

©2008 Google - [Google Home](#) - [About Google](#) - [Privacy Policy](#)

You're done!
 Look at My Subscribed Links to see it

phrase “jumbo burger”. Give a title and a text description, and include the URL of your site in the relevant fields. Agree to the terms of service and click Next.

In the following page, the HTML code for subscription buttons is provided. This can be inserted into your Web site or Web page. Since we are using a dummy example, we can skip this step for now and click the Finish button.

Your Subscribed Link “Red Hot Juicy Burgers!” is now created and available in your My Subscribed Links section as shown below.

To test its working, go to google.com and enter the keywords that are supposed to trigger the Subscribed Link. In our case this is “jumbo burgers”.

Users who click the button created in the step we skipped will get subscribed to the link when visiting your Web site.



Search Results with Subscribed Links

The above is a simple example of what can be done with subscribed links. More complex conditions can be handled by uploading a Subscribed Links file or providing a feed URL. To learn how to use Subscribed Links in advanced ways, check out the

Documentation section at www.google.com/coop/docs/guide_subscribed_links.html.

In addition to creating your own Subscribed Links, you can also subscribe to content in the Google Subscribed Links Directory. To review and select content and have it appear with contextual relevance when you are searching the Web, go to www.google.com/coop/subscribedlinks/directory and choose the listings you want to subscribe to. For example, for Subscribed Link information on the game of cricket, subscribe to Reto Meier in the Information section. Now, whenever your search keyword is “cricket”, you will see the Subscribed Link with related information.

5.3.3 Custom Search Engine

The latest and most innovative addition to Google Co-op is the Google Custom Search Engine or CSE. It is useful for both Webmasters as well as users. CSE enables Webmasters to create a search engine and place it on their Web site. It is customised both visually as well as in the search results to reflect the knowledge and interests of the Web site owners. With a CSE, searches

Google Co-op Custom Search Engine evan@thinkdigit@gmail.com | My Account | Sign out

Overview
New search engine
My search engines
My profile

Featured examples
Google Marker
Documentation
Discussion group
Support

Create a Custom Search Engine

1. Specify your search engine settings 2. Try it out and customize it further

Basic information

Give your search engine a name and provide a brief description. This information will be shown on your search engine's homepage on Google. [Learn more](#)

Search engine name:
e.g. Ideal Climate Search Engine

Search engine description:
e.g. Climate Science from Climate Scientists

Specify some keywords that describe the content or subject of your search engine. These keywords are used to tune your search engine results. [Learn more](#)

Search engine keywords:
e.g. climate "global warming" "greenhouse gases"

Sites to search

Specify a list of websites to search, or just your own site. You can add more sites later in your search engine's control panel or while you surf the web with the Google Marker. You must specify a complete address (e.g. "images.google.com" or "maps.google.com", not "google.com"). [Learn more](#)

Sites to search:

Custom Search Engine Settings

can be limited to a specific set of specialist sites. This enables user searches on a specific subject area to give more accurate results, since the query is applied to a highly focused list of specialist sites. Additionally, if allowed by the CSE creator, community members can contribute to the search engine. Webmasters can even link their AdSense for Search program to generate revenue from the search traffic.

To create your own search engine or see examples of CSEs, go to www.google.com/coop/cse/overview.

To create your own CSE, click on the “Create a Search Engine” button to get started. In the custom search engine form specify the required details. In this example we will create a CSE to search the *Digit Magazine* Web site. In the list of sites to include as part of the search engine, we limit ourselves to the main Digit Web site (thinkdigit.com) and the *Digit* forum (thinkdigit.com/forum).

You can also specify (not shown here) whether the entire Web should be searched with emphasis on these sites or exclu-

Google Custom Search Engine

Overview
New search engine
My search engines
My profile
Featured examples
Google Marker
Documentation
Discussion group
Support

Create a Custom Search Engine

1. Specify your search engine settings 2. Try it out and customize it further

Preview

Try out some queries in your search engine:

windows dual boot

Web results preview
If these aren't the results you expected, you can go back to step 1 and make changes. [close](#)

How to uninstall **Windows 98** from a **XP-98 Dual Boot?** (Archive ...)
[Archive] How to uninstall **Windows 98** from a **XP-98 Dual Boot?** Tutorials.
www.thinkdigit.com

Windows XP starts in second attempt only - Digit Forum
Both related to **Windows XP SP2** installation PATIENT: Pentium III 1 GiB 256MB RAM
40 GB/2 IDE HD/9600 Chipset motherboard/PCI LAN card. **Dual boot** ...
www.thinkdigit.com

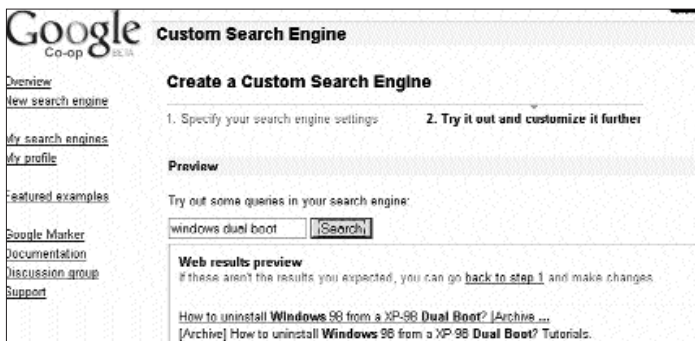
[Preview + Feedback] Digit April 06 - Page 5 - Digit Forum
By the by I want to **dual boot** RED HAT LINUX ENTERPRISE EDITION WS with **windows**.
I have a pentium 4 processor, 256 mb ram 4 drives are there - C,D,E,F. ...
www.thinkdigit.com

Microsoft explains activation with **Windows Vista** - Digit Forum
I dont think so for a **dual boot** system you will be required to purchase ...
Recently Microsoft announced licensing terms for **Windows Vista** which made many ...
www.thinkdigit.com

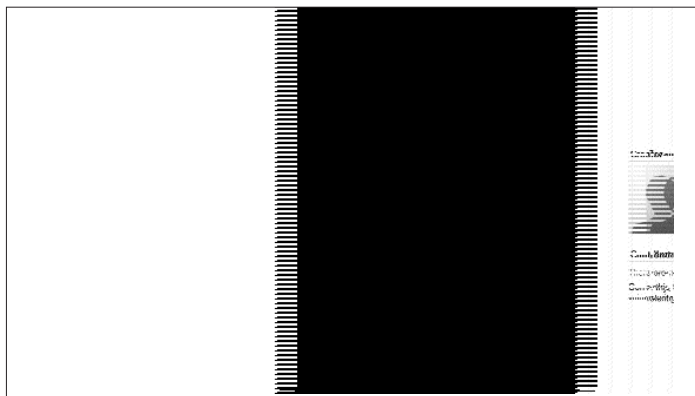
Congratulations!

Click "Finish" to go to your "My search engines" page, where you can access your search engine from its new homepage on Google or use its control panel to further customize it in the following ways:

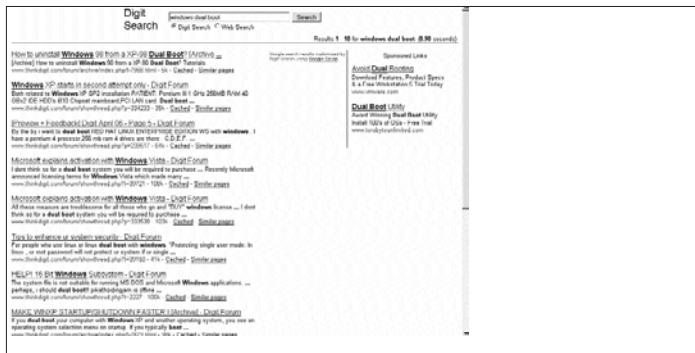
Testing your Custom Search Engine



The My Search Engines page



Sample CSE Homepage for Digit Magazine



Search Results with the Digit CSE

sively on these sites. Further, you can specify whether contribution and collaboration is open to the public or only to invitees. For the moment, we will limit ourselves to the *Digit* site and not allow open collaboration. Accept the terms of service and click Next.

From the following page, you can run a test search based on your CSE settings and check to see if the results are satisfactory.

Once you are satisfied with the results, click Finish and you will be taken to the “My Search Engines” page where you can further fine-tune the search engine settings.

From the “My Search Engines” page, you can either add the new CSE as a gadget to your personalised Google Home Page, or visit the “control panel” to modify and refine the settings, or visit this search engine’s homepage to run a custom search.

This simple example of the custom search engine demonstrates the flexibility with which you can create your own search engines focused on specialist topics or interests.

You can also go to www.google.com/coop/cse/examples/Latest to see a list of CSEs that are focused on different areas of expertise and interest. These CSEs can be added to your personalised Google Home Page via the “Add to Google” gadget button.

5.3.4 Google Marker

Google Marker is a tool that enables you to add or label site in a Google Topic or CSE. This tool is available at www.google.com/coop/cse/marker. It is available as a link that can be dragged and dropped on the Bookmarks toolbar (Firefox) or to the Links toolbar (Internet Explorer).

When you are at a Web site that you would like to add or exclude from your CSE or Google Topic, simply click on the

Google Marker link to activate the “Annotate” window. The window, depending on whether you have a CSE or are subscribed to a Google Topic or both, will provide options to include or exclude and correspondingly add annotation and apply labels. This is a quick and painless method to keep your CSE updated and your contribution to Google Topic active.

Google Checkout

When shopping online, going through the routine of filling up a registration form and getting a Demand Draft or cheque issued is painful. An online payment system eliminates the need for that routine. When registering for such a service, you provide information regarding yourself and your bank account or credit card to the service provider. The next time you shop online, you only need to log in to your online payment account, and you are taken to the payment provider's site to confirm the payment. The merchant and the service provider do the rest behind the scenes. The product also gets on its way to you faster.

Online payment systems usually charge the merchant transaction fees, which include a fixed charge and a percentage of the transaction value. In return, by including an online payment system on their site, merchants can hope to attract people who prefer the convenience of such payment process systems.

The present king of the hill by far in this market is PayPal, now an eBay subsidiary. Google's foray into this market is Checkout.

Google Checkout (GCK) was touted to be a "PayPal killer," but is considerably limited in its array of services. Unlike PayPal, GCK only caters to individual-to-business transactions. The service is not yet available in India.

6.1 Buyers

Users planning to use GCK for their purchases need to provide a credit card number, besides a residential address, at the time of signup. There are no fees associated with using GCK for purchasing online. GCK keeps track of all the transactions conducted by a user, so a purchase history is easily available. GCK does not reveal card details to merchants, and if the user so desires, even the e-mail ID is withheld. Also, it allows users to rate the merchants they purchased from. This rating is maintained independent of the merchant's site, and so allows other users to form unbiased opinions. GCK offers the user protection from credit card theft in case unauthorised purchases are made on the credit card.

6.2 Merchants

Merchants who want to offer the service are provided with JavaScript code that needs to be inserted into their site. The link provided in the code takes a visitor to the GCK page, where the details of the payment are to be filled out. GCK charges \$0.20 plus 2 per cent of the transaction value as fees. By offering discounts to member of its AdWords programme, Google offers some incentive to sign up for GCK. An investment in AdWords allows free transactions up to ten times that in GCK. So a merchant who's invested \$10 in AdWords is not levied any transaction fees for transactions of up to \$100. Other ways in which GCK helps merchants is by putting up an icon in their ads. People who can see the GCK icon in the site's ads can be assured that GCK is providing the payment service. This helps the GCK-supported site's ads to stand apart from other ads. Besides that, GCK helps merchants fight buyer fraud, a situation where buyers claim that the product they received is not as described.

6.3 Limitations

GCK is presently available only in the US. Unlike PayPal, it is not possible to transfer money between individuals; GCK only allows transfers between merchants who have registered at GCK and users. One oft-repeated comment about the service is the absence of any redirection after the purchase is complete. Ideally, after the user has confirmed the payment on the GCK site, he should be redirected to the merchant site or any site from which he came from. Unfortunately, in GCK, the user is left with just a thank you note from Google.

Concluding Remarks

Google, it would appear, has launched GCK cautiously. The scale of the operation seems to suggest that expansion will be a slow process. While there are few features that differentiate GCK and PayPal (apart from the fact that two non-merchant individuals can't send each other money), the fact that AdWords is a major player in online advertising and that Google is offering discounts to its AdWords users would help GCK find takers.

Google Calendar

7.1 Introduction

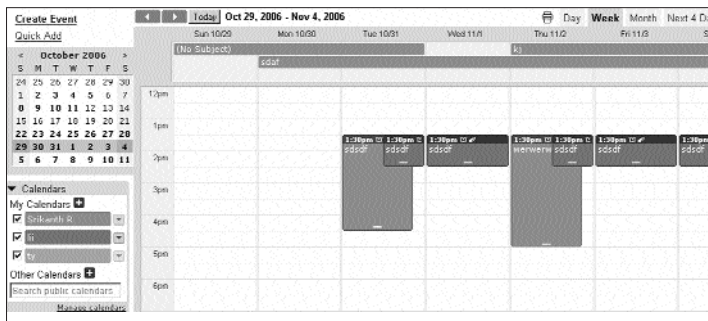
Google Calendar is part of Google's move to encourage users to shift routine tasks online. Google Calendar is a simple Appointment scheduler and Event Manager. But the addition of sharing and collaborative capabilities raises it from the mire of similar, offline products. Planning a group event with many invitees can be a challenge to any host, but thanks to Google Calendar, this need not be a nightmare anymore.

7.2 Using GC

7.2.1 Logging In

You can log in to Google Calendar with a Google ID, or add the Calendar service to your other Google services and then access Calendar with your Gmail ID and password. Like Gmail and Google Docs and Spreadsheets, Calendar, too, has an AJAX-driven interface. So expect delays after the login as the script is loaded.

The initial interface shows the Calendar in the middle; a mini calendar is displayed to the left, and below that is the Calendar



The Calendar Edit Tab

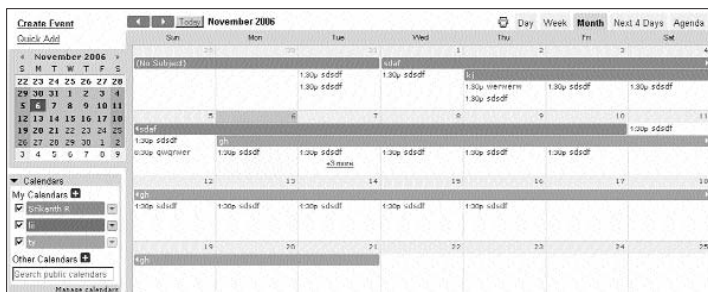
box listing the Calendars the user has. It is rather important at this juncture to distinguish between Google Calendar (GC), The Calendar (TC), User Calendar (UC), and calendar. Google Calendar refers to the service; TC is the interface showing the dates and times. User Calendars are those created by the user, and “calendar” simply refers to all the calendars in general.

The interval (the duration between two points in time) displayed in TC can be changed from the View Tab bar at the top right. At the top left, the interval displayed in TC is mentioned; next to that are the Previous and Next interval buttons, which can be used to move to the next interval in TC—depending on the view, this can be day, week, or month. The interval displayed in TC is also highlighted in the mini calendar.

GC offers an ingenious way to organise appointments. Rather than have a single calendar with different types of appointments—personal, social, business—GC allows the user to create discrete calendars for each type. All UCs thus created are superimposed over TC, and only appear when an event is marked on them. All UCs are displayed simultaneously, but since each UC sports a different colour, it is easy to figure out the types of appointments and their details.

7.2.2 Views

The number of days displayed by TC can be changed by using the



TC with three UCs

tab at the top right. A Day view shows the 24 hours with a row for each hour. The Week and “Next 4 Days” views show the hours as rows and the days as columns. The month view shows all days of the month, without the time detail. “Agenda” offers a birds-eye view of all appointments. To increase the details displayed, use the Expand All link at the top right. An “Annual View” is sorely missed.

7.2.3 Using GC

Before you can start using GC, it is best to decide the types of appointments you intend to track. Since most would prefer to segregate their official and personal appointments, it is best to start off by adding a UC. To do this, use the “+” sign beside “My Calendars” in the Calendar Box. Here you can enter relevant details and then click “Create Calendar.” This will cause the addition of one more entry in the Calendar Box. If you would like to change the name or the colour code of that UC, use the drop-down list adjacent to its name. The “Other Calendars” link offers the option to add other well-established calendars, like the one listing Government Holidays in India. Such a calendar would be an essential ingredient of prudent planning.

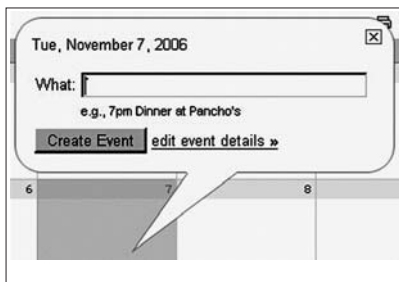
To add such a calendar, use the “+” sign next to Other Calendars, and under the Browse Calendars tab, add the “Indian Holidays” calendar. For best results, we would recommend setting TC to Month View. This allows a macro view of the month’s appointments. We explain later how to make this view the default.

7.2.4 Adding Events

There are many ways to add an event to a UC, but the easiest one is to click on a specific date on TC. This will cause a pop-up seeking information about the event, and the UC under which it needs to be recorded.

The interface is smart enough to identify time-related information in the entered text. So, to record an appointment for 6 PM with XYZ, entering “6pm someone” will create an entry for 6

PM to 7 PM with XYZ. Adding “6pm to 10 pm XYZ” will give the expected results. There are other keywords that are recognised, like months and dates, and location information. A complete guide on using these features is at www.google.com/support/calendar/bin/answer.py?answer=36604.



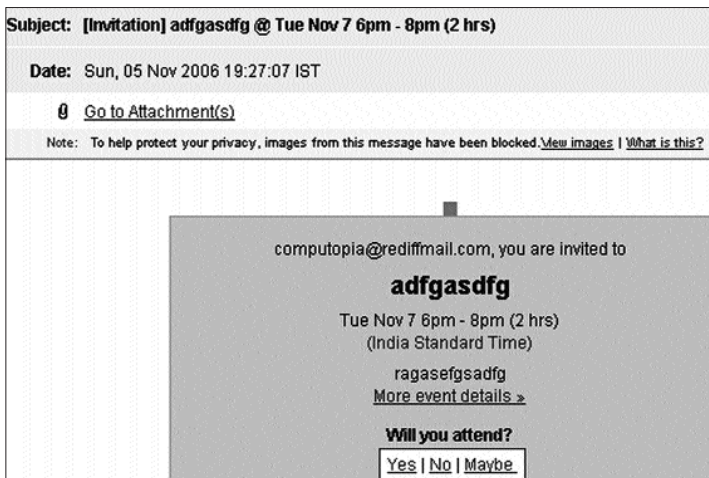
Create Event Pop up

You can still add detail without worrying about the recognition capabilities by clicking on the “Edit Event Details” link. By default, if TC is set in the Month View, GC assumes the event to drag through the whole day. If this is not the case, deselecting the “All Day” option will reveal the time range for that event. Under the Repeats dropdown, the periodicity of the event can be indicated. Location details can also be specified. A description box can be used to insert any invitational text or programme details.

If you would like to invite people to that event, say a party, you can fill their e-mail IDs in the Guests box. Additionally, you can also mention your availability for that event. The event can be

Additional event options

made Public so that people can access the event details even if they haven't been invited. GC allows invitees to learn about event details without having a Google ID. Clicking on Save will record that event, and if there are invitees, you are reminded about send-



Invitation email

ing e-mails to them. Unfortunately, the invitation cannot be created with custom text. All email invitations have a "[Invitation] so-and-so event @ Tue Nov 7 6pm–8pm (2 hrs)" as subject and a message body that adds the event description and links to visit the event page or directly convey acceptance or rejection.

The "Create Event" and "Quick Add" link at the top left also accomplish the same thing. The quick link is, as implied, the fastest way to enter event details, when used with the word recognition capabilities of GC. Entering the details like "10pm december 30 dinner with Skinner" and pressing the [Enter] button will create the expected entry. Quick indeed!

Your other events can be similarly added to relevant UCs. Events that have been added to one UC and need to be copied to another can be transferred using the "More Actions" drop-down at the top. This allows duplicating the entry or copying it to another UC.

7.2.5 Using TC

As soon as you create an event, TC will show an entry for that date in the associated UC colour. Events that drag the whole day are displayed as a bar, whereas events occurring during a time period only have the start time and event name. All events for all

Quick add pop up

UCs are similarly displayed. If you would like to curb a UC from showing up, deselect it from the Calendar box. The mini calendar will show dates with events in bold; clicking on those dates will take you to that day's page in TC.

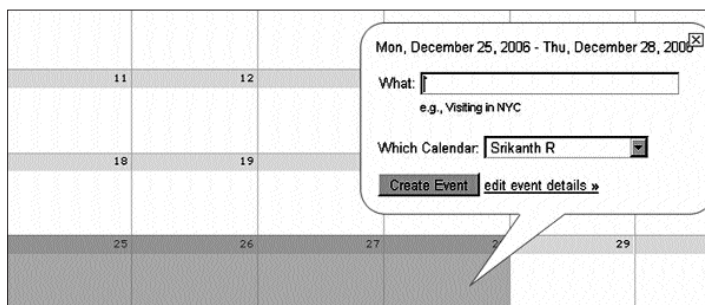
The selected view of TC influences the event-marking capabilities of GC. If you would like to quickly mark an entire week for the same event, you need to be in the Month View.

In this view, you can select all days of the week with a drag of the mouse, and the pop-up will automatically mark all days for that event. If you would like to push an event forward by a day, in the Month view you can drag the event marker to the new date.

Mini calendar with date selected

The same can be achieved in a different way when in Week View. Here, the top row of cells, just below the date title, can be used for dragging and dropping the event marker, in case the event drags through the whole day. If the event is just a few hours long, a mouse drag is all it takes to change the day or the time of day the event occurs. A mouse drag is also all it takes to reduce or increase the time allotted to the event.

Interestingly, in Week view, it is possible to miss out on some of the appointments if they occur at a time not displayed on the screen. The only indication of the existence of events beyond the displayed

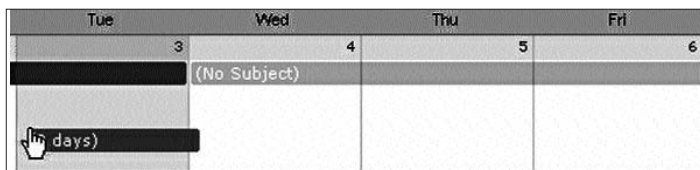


Multiple day event selection

time period is the small triangle that shows up next to the Date. Clicking on it causes TC to scroll up or down to show the event.

To add an event for a day or days in this view, click/drag on the cells in the top row. To add an event for a period of the day, click/drag across the rows.

In Day view, you cannot add events that stretch across days using just the mouse.



Changing an event's start date

The Agenda view lists all events in a certain time frame from the selected UC, date-wise. The start of the time frame is highlighted on the Mini Map, and can be reset by clicking on another date with an event on the Mini Map.

The “Look for Earlier Events” and “Look for More” links can also be used to increase the time frame detailed. For periods with too many events, the Up and Down keys below “Agenda” allow for scrolling through them.

The Search box at the top offers an easy way to find events. Clicking on the Search Options link opens up further search refinement options.



Increasing event time

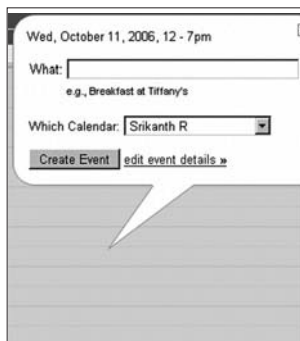


The More events indicator

7.2.6 Reminders



Multiple day selection in week view



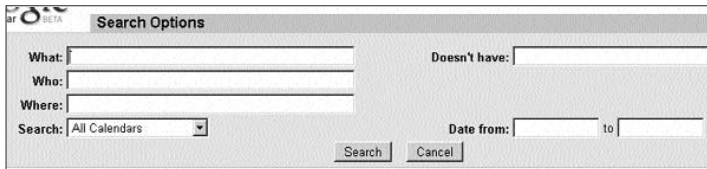
Multiple hour selection



Agenda view

By default, a Reminder for the event's hosts and guests, is set for 10 minutes. This can be changed for each event. Unfortunately, and strangely, no reminder e-mails are sent by default; just a pop-up in GC passes off as a wake-up call. This can be changed in the Settings, meaning that a user is expected to wade through the Settings before putting GC to good use.

7.2.7 Collaboration



The screenshot shows the 'Search Options' dialog box in Google Calendar. It has a title bar with 'ar BETA' and 'Search Options'. The form includes fields for 'What:', 'Who:', and 'Where:'. There is a 'Search:' dropdown menu currently set to 'All Calendars'. To the right, there is a 'Doesn't have:' field and a 'Date from:' field with a 'to' field. At the bottom right are 'Search' and 'Cancel' buttons.

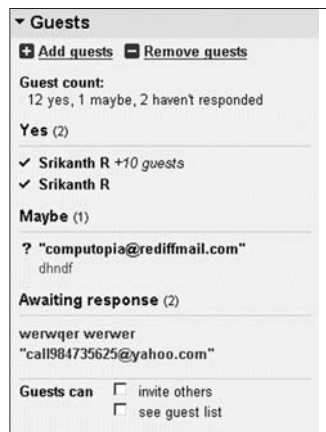
Search options

Planning an event with many invitations is easily carried out in GC. The e-mail capability is just one of the aids. Invitees can reply to the e-mail, accepting or rejecting the invitation, and their status will be updated in the UC accordingly.



Agenda scroller

Invitees can visit the event page in the UC and leave a comment. If changes in the Event are made, GC will remind you to inform invitees about the change. Invitations sent from GC can be configured to allow invitees to invite their friends in turn, or check the guest list. All this is possible without the having a Google ID, which makes things easier for the guests.



The screenshot shows the 'Guests' section of an event page. It has a title '▼ Guests' and two buttons: 'Add guests' and 'Remove guests'. Below this is the 'Guest count:' section showing '12 yes, 1 maybe, 2 haven't responded'. The 'Yes (2)' section lists two guests: 'Srikanth R +10 guests' and 'Srikanth R'. The 'Maybe (1)' section lists one guest: '? "computopia@rediffmail.com" dhndf'. The 'Awaiting response (2)' section lists two guests: 'werwqer werwqer' and '"cal1984735625@yahoo.com"'. At the bottom, there are two checkboxes: 'Guests can' with 'invite others' and 'see guest list' options.

Guest status

A UC can also be shared with other people. But these people need to have Google IDs to be able to contribute or to view the calendar. How to go about doing this is explained in §7.4. Besides sharing the entire UC, individual events in it can be shared. Under the Options for every event, the Privacy settings controls this behaviour. Public events can be viewed by anyone and are searchable, even if the UC is not shared. The reverse—where the UC is shared but the event is private—can also be similarly accomplished. The default settings enable the settings of the event to be the same as those of the UC settings.

7.3 Integration With Other Google Services

UC events that have location data filled have an additional link in their pop up—“MAP”. Clicking on this link takes you to the specific location in the Google Maps page. Unfortunately, since India is not as thoroughly mapped as developed countries, the zoom levels available are not high enough to allow streets to be identified.

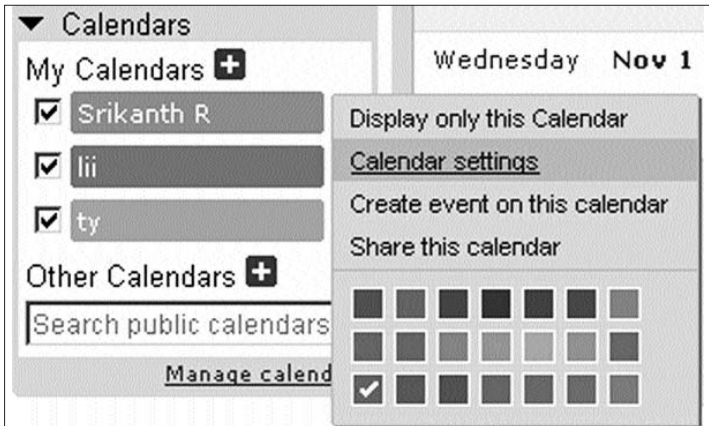


Map integration

Nevertheless, to realise its potential, you could enter “London” as the location and revel at the capabilities.

Gmail and GC are integrated, so events can be marked into GC from Gmail itself by using the Add Event Info link in the compose e-mail view.

7.4 Configuring A UC



The UC Drop down

The UC settings can be accessed by using the drop-down button next to the UC name in the Calendar Box.

The “Share This Calendar” tab contains option for letting others view or modify the UC in question. The “Share with Everyone” section controls who can view the calendar. If you would prefer to keep access restricted, as it is by default, keep “Do not Share with Everyone” enabled. In this scenario, to allow people to see or modify the calendar, use the next subsection, “Share with Specific People”. The e-mail IDs can be entered here, and if these people already have a Google ID, they can view or modify the calendar based on the permissions set in the adjoining drop-down. The permission options are self-explanatory. If the invitees do not have a Google ID, on saving the options you are prompted to invite these people to GC. Allowing Sharing with everyone, either all information or free / busy information only, enables people without Google IDs to view the calendar.

On selecting either of these options, GC presents a button and the associated HTML code which needs to be copied into a

Share with specific people: Share with other people or edit who has access.	PERSON	HAS PERMISSION TO
	Srikanth R <hnmakirs@gmail.com>	Make changes AND manage sharing
	"computopia@rediffmail.com" <computopia@rediffmail.com>	See free/busy information (no details) ▾ Make changes AND manage sharing Make changes to events See all event details
	ADD A NEW PERSON:	See free/busy information (no details)

Sharing permissions with others

webpage (if the user has a website) to enable visitors to that page to see the calendar by clicking the button. GC also reminds you that enabling sharing will allow the calendar to show up in searches.

If sharing is enabled, you can use the Calendar Address provided under the Calendar Details tab to allow access to the calendar's RSS feed. The XML link is for RSS Feed Readers, while the HTML link is for accessing the link through a browser. The Private Address is for private use, and offers a way to the user to check the calendar either through the browser or RSS feed reader without having to sign into the GC account. This link is special because it allows viewing the calendar even when it is not "Shared with Everyone." Sharing the private address is obviously not prudent if your calendar information is best kept private. But a new private URL can be created by clicking the "Reset Private URLs" link.

7.5 Configuring GC

The Settings link on the top right allows configuring TC and GC.

Under the General Tab, besides other settings, you can control the default TC view and modify the Custom View in the View tab. "Automatically add Invitations to my Calendar" controls the UC behaviour with regard to invitations received from others. It is best to keep it enabled, since that way you need not worry about tracking invitation e-mails—the relevant information is available in GC itself. Under the Calendars tab, you can add or delete UCs or modify their Shared status. Under the Notifications tab, you can

Calendar Address: Learn more Change sharing settings	XML ICAL HTML This is the address for your calendar. No one public.
Private Address: Learn more	XML ICAL HTML Reset Private URLs This is the private address for this calendar. Only you can see all the events on this calendar.

Private and Public URLs

modify the default behaviour of GC.

It is recommended to add Email as a mode of notification for all events. If you are among the lucky few mobile users whose service provider supports reminder SMSes, you can opt for this service.

Country:	India
Phone number:	+919447077370
Carrier:	BPL Mobile Communications Ltd Select carrier... Bharti Cellular Ltd (Airtel Delhi) Bharti Mobile Ltd (Airtel Karnataka) BPL Mobile Communications Ltd Hutchison Essar Telecom Limited Hutchison Max Telecom PVT Ltd Hutchison Telecom East Limited
Verification code: Please enter the verification code sent to your phone	

SMS supporting service providers

A verification code will be sent to the mobile before the service is activated. Whether this service is free is best answered by the service provider. The Import Calendar tab allows importing appointments saved in MS Outlook.

Digital Leisure



Blogger

8.1 Introduction

Blogging, short for Web Logging, is the term used for something as simple as maintaining a diary or journal online. For those not in the habit of maintaining a diary, a blog is a place to jot down thoughts. It can be a record of events that can make an interesting read a few years down the line. It can be something as mundane as a daily work schedule, or it can be something as interesting as a daily record of a journey through space: check out <http://spaceblog.xprize.org/>, the blog of Anousheh Ansari, the first female space tourist.

A Blog can be personal—a single person's notes—or communal, where a group of individuals contribute, like members of an organisation. Blogs can offer a glimpse into the life of a person; they can be informative; they can be the ramblings of a like-minded soul; they can be all about what someone has found interesting online; in fact, they can be a lot of things, and there are as many reasons to read blogs as there are to maintain one.

Given the ease with which a blog can be created online—there are free tools to create and host them—it is easy to understand the popularity they have attained. Blogger is Google's response to the popular need to blog. While Blogger is the tool used to create blogs, the blogs themselves are hosted at blogspot.com.

Blogger is the result of Google's acquisition of Pyra Labs, the creators of Blogger—a Web logging tool, and Blogspot—a Web log host.

8.2 The Essentials Of Blogging

All blogs hosts offer the basic tools needed to maintain a diary or journal: you need not worry about learning to code. The user interfaces are intuitive, and anyone can master the basics with ease. Adding images and links to other pages are all easily accomplished. Putting up the page online, also called Publishing, in most cases, just involves a mouse click. Previous blog entries are archived for easy access.

While maintaining a blog is similar to maintaining a Web site, people these days tend to prefer blogging sites because of the simplicity. The toughest part of maintaining a diary, of course, is finding something interesting to record.

8.3 Using Blogger

8.3.1 Creating a Blog

Blogger can be accessed at www.blogger.com. You need to sign up to be able to create a blog. You can sign in to Blogger using your Gmail ID. Alternatively, you can also create a distinct Blogger ID.

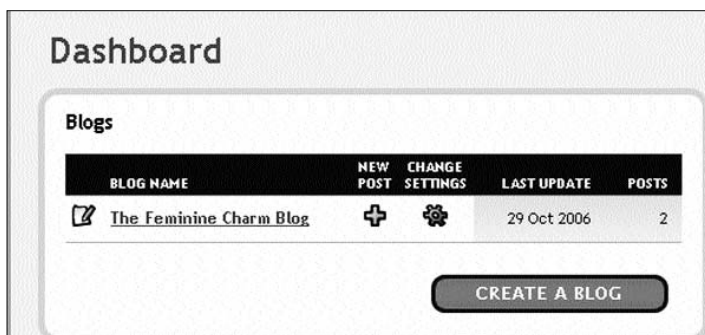
Like any Web page, your blog will have a URL—the address by which others will access it. Thanks to the popularity of blogger.com, the chances of finding your preferred blog URL are slim—for example, if your name is as common as Rajesh, forget about rajesh.blogspot.com—in fact, even forget about rajesh1.blogspot.com! So, once you have compromised on a URL of your choice, you are presented with a clutch of page styles to choose from. The styles differ in the font, colour, and layout, and there is a preview of each. After you have finalised the page style, you can ask Google to go ahead and create the blog. “Creating” the blog is nothing but publishing a Web page online. The page, with the style you choose, could have been manually coded using HTML and scripts. Fortunately, all the necessary functions are carried out in the background, leaving you to twiddle your thumbs as the process

is gone through. Simplicity, like we said, is the buzzword. Once the blog is published, it can be accessed at the URL you chose, and you can start posting to it.

8.3.2 Adding Content

Adding content to your blog is accomplished through the online text editor (at blogger.com). This editor allows for modifying of the font, font size and colour, applying bolding and italicisation, setting paragraph alignment, adding numbers and bullets, and spell checking—all at the press of a button. Adding images and links to other pages are also accomplished through the editor. You can also use the familiar shortcut keys to accomplish routine tasks like applying italics and so on; this feature is common to all Google services. Once your post is ready, it needs to be “published” so it becomes available online. You can preview your post before publishing it. Also, the content can be saved as a draft and published later.

8.3.3 Navigating the Dashboard



The Blogger Dashboard

Every time you log into your Blogger account, after the first time, you are presented with what is called the Dashboard. This is an area where you can see the blogs you already have, add blogs (a user can have more than one blog), make changes to your blog settings, and add post to a blog.

8.3.4 Blog Settings

8.3.4.1 Blogging by e-mail

You need not go to blogger.com every time you have something interesting to write. You can just e-mail your post, and blogger will automatically publish it. To enable this feature, visit the “Email” link under the Settings tab. The Mail-to-Blogger Address is the address to which you need to send your e-mail posts for the blog to be updated. The BlogSend Address is the email ID where Blogger will send a copy of the post to, each time the blog is updated.



The Blogger Settings tab

8.3.4.2 Creating RSS Feeds

RSS (Really Simple Syndication/Rich Site Summary) is a system by which Web sites can inform their readers when the site is updated. Through this system a site can create a small file, called a Feed, containing information about the updated content. Readers can use Feed Readers to subscribe to the RSS system of the Web site. Feed readers access the site's feed available at a particular URL, and display the content to readers who can remain informed of site changes—without visiting the site. Most feeds offer only a small part of the updated content, acting as an appetiser for the reader to visit the site to read all the content.

Blogger supports the RSS system, which is enabled by default. You can control the feed settings or disable it from the Site Feed link under the Settings tab. The site feed URL displayed on the page is the URL that feed readers need to be directed to to access your blog's feeds. Under the Descriptions heading, you can choose to send entire blog posts to subscribers, or just a small part to whet their interest so that they visit your blog and read the rest. Akin to the user's signature in an e-mail, an Article Footer is additional text appended to the content in the RSS feed. If you desire to insert an Article Footer, it can be done in the adjoining text box.

Blogger also allows you to add an AdSense (discussed elsewhere) text ad as an Article Footer.

8.3.4.3 Create a Team Blog

A Blog can become a common ground for members of a team or organisation to collectively record their views. Take the Blogger blog for instance (<http://buzz.blogger.com/>). A unified blog frees the reader and other team members from the need to visit the individual blogs of each team member to know what they've been thinking.

You can add team members under the Members link in the Settings tab. The names of the team members show up under the Contributors title on the blog. A post has its contributor's name associated with it. Members need to have individual Blogger IDs to be able to participate, since each member has to log in using his ID. Ordinary members cannot alter blog settings or modify other member's blogs—administrators (Admins) can. So before according that status to a member, be sure you know what you are doing. Ordinary members can be promoted to Admins from the same page.

8.3.4.4 Archiving

One of the advantages of online journals is that the writer is freed from the worry of keeping track of his earlier posts. A prolific blogger, had he been using pen and paper, would be quickly burdened with the need to find storage space for the stacks of journals, and once stored, retrieving would be another bother. For blogs, this is a non-issue. Earlier entries can be periodically archived, so unwanted clutter can be avoided on the blog page. At the same time, they can be easily accessed.

Under the Archiving link in the Settings tab, you can choose the frequency with which this archiving occurs. Entries that are archived are visible under the Archives link on the blog.

Under the same link, you can also decide whether to allocate one page per post. Doing this allocates a URL to each blog entry. Compared to having many blog entries on a single page, the one-

page-per-post layout allows readers to go directly to a specific post without scrolling through an entire page of posts trying to find the one they want to look at. The flip side is that there will be a lot of clicking to be done if someone wants to read through a week of posts. It is recommended you use the one-page-per-post layout if your posts tend to be about a page in length; if you only jot a few lines in most of your posts, it is better to avoid this layout.

8.3.4.5 Comment Control

Readers of your blog would like to be able to air their views on it—they might agree or disagree with what you’ve expressed, or they might just want to offer words of appreciation. The Comments link grants the ability to manage readers’ comments. If you would like what others have to say about your thoughts to appear on your blog, you can choose to Show, otherwise, Hide them. Under the “Who Can Comment?” title, you can decide whether all readers should be given the power to comment, or whether it should be restricted to registered members of the blog.

If you’d like to be informed whenever a comment is added to your blog, you can enter the e-mail ID you’d prefer the alerts to be sent to in the Comment Notification Address field. To avoid irresponsible comments or spam turning up on your blog, it is best to enable Comment Moderation. This way, every time a reader who is not a member of the blog adds a comment, you are informed by e-mail, and the comment doesn’t show up on the blog unless you choose so.

The popularity of your blog can be determined by the number of other sites linking to it: say someone with a blog of his own reads your blog and likes what you have said, and offers a link to your blog on his. This would be called a back-link. Enabling back-links will reveal the number of other sites that have linked to your post.

Word Verification is a feature that can prevent the use of software programs to enter comments, mostly spam, to your blog. Word Verification uses an image containing a series of digits or letters as a part of the commenting process. Since only

human beings can decipher the content of the image, such commenting programs can be blocked. Enabling Word Verification is recommended.

8.3.4.6 Publishing Options

You can choose to host the blog you create at Blogger.com at some other host besides blogspot.com. Blogger allows you to configure the service so that every time you click on the Publish button at blogger.com, the blog on the other host gets updated. The server settings are included under the Publishing link.

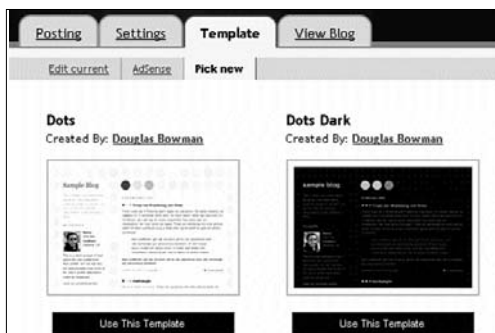
Weblogs is a blog indexing service that keeps updated information about all blogs. Someone tracking blogs—newly-created or newly-updated blogs—can find the latest information at Weblogs.com. Blogger can be configured to notify Weblogs every time your blog is updated. This way, your blog will figure in the recently-updated blogs list at Weblogs.com.

8.3.4.7 Changing Templates

The Template tab allows you to modify the page layout of your blog. The Pick New link offers more page style options than were presented during sign-up.

8.3.4.8 Customising the Template

Nothing speaks more about your dedication to blogging than a customised template, which requires modifying HTML code—and, to an extent, is not recommended for newcomers to blogging. The Edit Current link allows you to customise the layout. The Beta version of Blogger, discussed later, allows significant customisation.



Use Blogger's Template tab to change the default look

tion, which can be done even by HTML-illiterate users. This is a strong reason to switch to the Beta version.

8.3.4.9 Making Money from your blog

AdSense is a programme promoted by Google that involves putting text ads onto your site and making money every time a visitor to the blog clicks on the ad. If you intend to convert your blog into a money-making operation, Blogger can help you. You can find the option to enable AdSense under the Template Tab. Before you can start making money, you need to sign up for the AdSense programme. Then you can choose the size and colour of the ad box you're willing to show on your blog.

The content in the ad box comes from the servers at Google. Details of the AdSense programme are covered thoroughly in another chapter. But briefly, the ads that will appear in the box will be dictated by the content on your page. Every time a visitor to your blog is motivated to click on the ad, you earn. The AdSense programme administrators will review your blog to see whether it is worthy of inclusion, and only then can you hear the ring as the pennies add up.

8.4 The Beta

Google now offers an upgraded beta version of the Blogger service, albeit with two important caveats—you need a Gmail account, and the switch-over is permanent. So do not use your existing account to “test” the beta, since you will not be able to switch back to the old Blogger if the new one is not to your liking. It is better to create a new identity and then test the Beta.

8.4.1 Additional Features

At first glance, not much distinguishes the Beta from the original Blogger interface. The Settings tab and all its contents are similar.



The Beta Dashboard



The Settings tab in the Beta version



The Template tab in Beta stage

One additional feature is the ability to control who can view your blog. This can be set under the Permissions link.

The more conspicuous differences are under the Template tab. Changes in the layout which required altering the HTML code of the template in the original Blogger can be accomplished by sim-

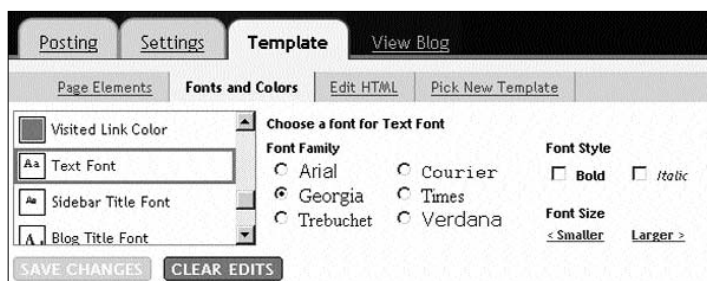
ple clicks (or drag and drop) in the Beta, thanks to the extensive use of scripts in the interface.

You can alter content positioning, and add content like an AdSense ad or an RSS feed from another site under the Page Elements link.

To change font type and size, and font colour and page colour, visit the Fonts and Colours link.



Adding page elements



Try the Template fonts

Under the Pick New Template, you will see that the number of template options have been increased, with each template offering a subtle variation.

8.5 Concluding Remarks

Blogger has been a popular destination for blogging enthusiasts thanks to the easy to use and configure tool, the clean, Spartan layout, and absence of ads in the hosting service. The enhanced tweaking capabilities of the beta version will only increase its attractiveness. Incorporating AdSense offers a convenient way to earn money from your blog—if the content is interesting enough!

Orkut

9.1 Introduction

“Social Networking” is a fancy term for “making friends.” In a world where a person’s worth is based to a large extent on the contacts he has, social networking is everything. While making friends may seem like a childish pursuit the first time you think about it, the very reason it was reincarnated as “Social Networking” is to underscore its importance in commercial situations.

Sites that allow like-minded people to meet, discuss and share ideas, and collaborate are popular because they leverage the power of the Internet to dissolve distance barriers and pull people closer. Orkut is Google’s foray into this area.

The weird name comes from the creator of the application—Orkut Buyukkokten, an engineer at Google.

9.2 Understanding Orkut

At first glance, Orkut would seem like the wrong place for introverted, reticent people. People who feel uncomfortable at parties and get-togethers, where a lot of social networking occurs, rarely call up the courage to introduce oneself to an unknown person. And this awkwardness persists even when it comes to making the first move online, but it is considerably reduced. The anonymous and sterile nature of online communication frees shy people from the anxiety of feeling exposed. Besides, fear of rejection and ridicule are reduced since Orkut provides a wealth of information about members—not just self-description, but also what others have to say, which increases the chances of identifying like-minded people. Considering what is on offer, Orkut would in fact be an ideal place for introverts to start socialising.

Orkut followed a system of granting membership through invita-

tion only. This means that members of Orkut had to send out invitations to others so they could sign up. This ensured that new members at least had one person as their friend on the site. This has changed. Now anyone can sign up to Orkut after creating a Google ID. If you already have a Gmail ID, you can enable Orkut by visiting the Google Services link on top of the Gmail account page. People signing up directly can invite their friends to join up and form a group.

Google IDs and Gmail ID

Google offers a host of services, all of which are the focus of this book. Gmail is the free e-mail service from Google. A Gmail ID is one that allows access to the e-mail service. To access some of Google's other services, you need to associate them with the Gmail ID. This way you can use all the services with a single ID. To associate services, use the "All my Services" link at the top of the Standard Gmail page.

If you do not have a Gmail ID, you can still use almost all Google services. For this you only need a Google ID which you can get by providing your existing, non-Gmail, e-mail ID. To access any service that asks for a Google ID, you provide the existing, non-Gmail, e-mail ID as username. For example, if you do not have a Gmail ID and your existing e-mail ID is boohoo@sify.com, you can sign up for a Google ID by providing boohoo@sify.com. To sign into any Google Service, the username to use will be boohoo@sify.com.

Conspicuously, a Google ID doesn't allow access to Gmail—which is still by invitation only; unlike every other Google Service.

The Google ID forms a central passport to all Google Services. This allows Google to track all your activities throughout the Google service umbrella, and helps them form a better-informed database of your likes and dislikes, which can be used to offer precisely-targeted advertising—which is Google's lifeline.

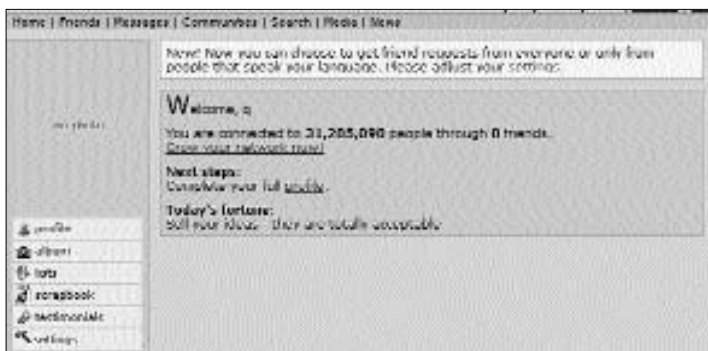
To understand Orkut, one needs to look at the process of forming and maintaining friendships and acquaintances. Briefly, step one is a formal introduction—what happens when you enter a new organisation; step two is the discovery of common interests—you find others who share your ideas; step three is continued interaction with selected people, possibly leading to friendship.

Orkut fuses two services—e-mail, and a forum / bulletin board. Both

are modes of communication that allow the creation of relationships. To this combination, Orkut adds the system of relationship ranking, wherein acquaintances offer opinions about each other. These rankings act as an indicator to a newcomer about the possible outcome of an introduction.

9.3 Using Orkut

9.3.1 Creating a Profile



The Orkut welcome message

After the first sign-up, you need to fill up a profile page that seeks out as much information as possible. While only the first profile page is compulsory, filling up all four pages is recommended. This profile will be publicly viewable, so any person wanting to befriend you need not send an e-mail asking you for details if that question is already answered by your profile page. This also saves you the awkwardness of rejecting someone's offer of friendship. After providing these details, you are presented with an odd Welcome message like: "You are connected to 31,274,260 people through 0 friends. Grow your network now!"

Well, if one is already connected to all these people, do you really have to "grow your network"? A rare slip from Google. Expect that message to change very soon!

Wisecracks aside, the best way to start “growing your network” is to click the Communities link.

9.3.2 Communities

Under the Communities link, you’ll see a category-wise listing. Choosing a relevant category will reveal the communities under it. And clicking on a community name takes you to the Community page. The Community page, among other things, reveals the Members, a forum, and an Events Calendar.

In Orkut, a Community stands for a common meeting ground for people sharing the interest as signified by the Community name or its description. It is the basic social network unit. Anyone can create a Community. What counts is the number of people who become members. Say you are a Linux fan looking for others sharing your passion. Becoming a member of the Linux and Free Software communities exposes you to other people who share your tastes. Knowing that you share similar interests improves your chances of finding someone you feel comfortable with. This way, you’re already on your way to forming an acquaintance.

It needs to be mentioned that one need not become a member of a Community to know its members and befriend them. But, since that is the way you came to know of them, it pays to be a member of the Community, even though you are not in any other way contributing to it.



Community listing



The Community page

The Community Forum can be used by members to collectively share their views, while any of the members can use the Calendar to notify other members of any events that have been planned.

A word of caution is necessary here. Community forums are open to all kinds of messages. Unless the forum is moderated, finding spam or inappropriate messages is common, as in all other forums. The creator of the forum decides whether to moderate a forum or not. Given the number of communities with spam messages we came across, it is safe to conclude that forums are not the preferred mode of communication. They are there to serve the purpose of bringing together like-minded individuals.

9.3.3 Forming a Community

If you have a niche interest, say collecting floppy disks, and no existing Community serves people like you, you can create one. For this, click on the Create button under the list of Community Categories. Here you can choose the name, description and category of the Community, which are mandatory. Other parameters of the Community—like whether it will be moderated (in which case memberships are vetted by moderators), whether the forum will be open to members only, the location of the Community, etc. can also be optionally set. Once all necessary details have been added, click Create. Once the Community is created, you are presented with the Community Page.

Depending on the number of people sharing your interest, you can expect members to join your Community—or you can invite your Friends, if any, to join it using the Invite Friends link.

If the member population explodes, a member can be elevated to a Moderator to share the administrative load. The Add Moderator link appears on the Community page. You can search for the Member you want to appoint as Moderator using the Search Member field, and then click on the Grant Moderator Privileges button to complete the procedure.

9.3.4 Searching for a Contact

One can search for potential friends or old acquaintances, by clicking on the Search link and then on the User link. By default, Orkut applies the country filter, so only people who have entered



Search Users

the same Country as yours in their profile are displayed. This can be changed by clicking on the Change Filters link. Here you can see the filters available and obviously they match the fields of the member profile you created during the sign up. You can set the required filters and conduct the Search by clicking on the search button.

9.3.5 Profiles

Clicking on a member ID takes you to the respective Member page where the member profile is displayed. Beside the self-described profile, Orkut also allows a member's friends to offer his views on the member as scraps or Testimonials (described next), or rate them on different parameters like Sexiness, Coolness, etc. More importantly, the Member page also shows the member's friends and the Communities he is a member of. From Community to Members to their friends, the “networking” aspect of relationships becomes evident. Unravelling this network is a great way to make friends and spend time.

9.3.6 Understanding the Notations

9.3.6.1 Numbers

By now you will have noticed the parentheses and the number contained within that accompanies each member name. This is the number of people who have befriended that person.



A typical member page

9.3.6.2 Scraps

Scraps refers to the scribbles that other members make about a member in his Scrapbook. Clicking on the View Scrap Book link will reveal what others have already said about the member, and also reveal a text box for add scraps. Scraps are not moderated and appear instantly on the member's page—though they can be deleted later by the member.

9.3.6.3 “Trust, Cool, Sexy, Fan” Ranking

These refer to the opinions that other members have about a member on those criteria—Trustworthiness, Coolness, Sexiness, Ability to Awe. There are no formal verification procedures for these rankings, of course. But a member who has received high trust rankings from many friends can be safely expected to be trustworthy. In the same vein, someone who has been ranked high on “Coolness” and “Sexiness” can be expected to be a Jon Abraham look-alike and not a bespectacled geek.

9.3.6.4 Testimonials

This is what a member’s friends have to say about him. But unlike scraps, these comments can be vetted by the member before they are posted, and only friends can post testimonials.

9.3.7 Initiating dialogue

After you have found a person who has the tastes and personality traits you’re looking for, you can initiate dialogue by requesting to be considered as that member’s friend. For this, use the “Add as a friend” link.

The Member is notified of your request and is given the freedom to reciprocate or spurn your overture. Having a descriptive profile of yourself doubtless improves your chances of acceptance. You can also send a message to that Member, introducing yourself, by using the Send Message Link. The Send Teaser link offers the same functionality as Send Message, but adds some mystery. It is best reserved for members of the opposite sex you are planning on befriending.

9.3.8 Maintaining Relationships

Once you have made friends, you can add testimonials or rate them on the various parameters like trust, cool, etc., making it easier for others to judge them before offering a hand of friendship. Friends can be categorised based on their emotional and physical proximity to you as best friends, good friends, and so on. Friends can also be categorised into groups: Business Contacts, for example, can be clas-

sified under a group termed Business. Groups can be created by using the New Group link.

9.3.8.1 Scrapping

Scrapping, or adding scraps, is a social activity much like the lice picking indulged in by monkeys. It is fun and keeps friends close, and hence is a popular activity at Orkut. While people could stick to the lean and narrow while scrapping, Orkut offers a host of ways to make your scrap look interesting. The “Formatting Tips” adjacent to the Scrap box offers tips on how to use rudimentary HTML-like code to this end. For example enclosing any text within `[red]` and `[/red]` will make it appear...well...red! If content is more important to you, you need not bother reading up on the formatting tips. Entries in your scrapbook can be replied to, unfortunately the replies are only visible on the scrapbook of the person who put in the original scrap. So, for all practical purposes, though the link says so, it isn't a “reply”, rather a link which allows you to scrap without bothering to visit the scrapbook of the person.

friend levels:

- 👤 [best friends \(0\)](#)
- 👤 [good friends \(0\)](#)
- 👤 [friends \(0\)](#)
- 👤 [acquaintances \(0\)](#)
- 👤 [haven't met \(0\)](#)

friend groups: [new group](#)

invite a friend to orkut

first name:

last name:

email:

[bulk invite](#)

download contacts

You can download all your contacts in CSV (comma separated value) format.

legend

★	i'm a fan
😊😊😊	trustworthy
😊😊😊😊😊	very trustworthy
😊😊😊😊😊😊😊	super trustworthy
👍👍👍	cool
👍👍👍👍	very cool
👍👍👍👍👍	super cool
❤️	sexy
❤️❤️❤️	very sexy
❤️❤️❤️❤️	super sexy

Friend categorisation

The services on offer at Orkut are suited to maintaining relationships. The events calendar can be used as a place to plan events collectively; the forum can be used to seek suggestions or advice from other members on any problem. Orkut can be configured by using the Settings link to forward messages to your e-mail informing you of any event like new friendships or new testimonials so nothing is missed even if you do not visit the site.

Scrapbing Tools: Scrapboy

Serious Orkut users with a large friend network would feel a strong itch to scrap frequently. For such people, dedicated software like the free Scrapboy would be worth every KB of its 25 MB download. About 90 per cent of the large download size is the .NET framework, unfortunately a discrete download file could not be found even on the site—scrapboy.com. On



Scrap in Action

installing and running Scrapboy, you are presented with an IM-client-esque interface. You log in using your Orkut account, and the friend details from the Orkut site are downloaded and shown. As in IM Clients there are two windows, one shows the friends, while the other shows the scraps and allows replying to them. Text formatting can be easily done as in the case of IM clients.

While a check for new scraps is made on logging in, this is not repeated, so you need to frequently click on the “Click here to retrieve new scraps” link. Otherwise, Scrapboy offers a convenient way to indulge in scrapbing.

9.3.9 What else can you do?

Orkut incorporates Orkut Media—a place where appointed contributors share their words and images on different topics. Orkut members can also send their contributions to Orkut Media, but these are screened by the Editors before being published.

9.4 Caution

People who are regular Net users and aware of the dubious nature of online identity will realise that Orkut can be an excellent hunting ground for people with malicious intent. People entering the site for the first time and eager to befriend the entire Orkut family can easily fall prey to such people and schemes. Caution needs to be exercised when dealing with others, no matter what information is provided on the site. It is really easy for a person to create multiple identities and increase the rankings and ratings of one of them. To have a safe stay at Orkut the following tips could be useful.

1. Never give out personal information to friends who have recently befriended you.
2. Avoid clicking on spam messages that regularly show up in the community forum.
3. Identity thieves will try to hijack your Orkut account by sending an e-mail asking for your username and password. Such e-mails are better deleted or marked as spam. Ensure that the page you enter your username and password is at orkut.com.
4. Evaluate the nature of information provided in your profile. Avoid information and pictures that could be misused. Email IDs, if made public, can and will attract spam messages. Phone numbers and physical addresses are best left blank in the profile. Using a secondary email ID for Orkut is also recommended.
5. If you are at the receiving end of persistent unwanted attention, feel free to inform Orkut.

9.5 Concluding Remarks

For the extrovert, Orkut is an excellent opportunity to make friends the world over. For the introvert, Orkut offers an opportunity to befriend folks selectively on one's own terms. For those seeking business contacts, Orkut can play facilitator for interstate or international opportunities. The site has a comprehensive help system that makes it easy to use all the features on offer.

Un-moderated content in community forums are a put-off. Orkut, which incorporates an e-mail system, could have offered Orkut e-mail IDs like `xyz@orkut.com`, so that members could have used that as the sole e-mail ID—unlike now, where a member cannot receive messages other than those sent from Orkut in their Orkut message box, necessitating the use of an external email ID like Gmail or Yahoo! for other mails. Finally, chatting could have been incorporated, and this is probably in the pipeline.

Gmail and Google Talk

10.1 Introduction

Gmail truly stands out when compared to other popular e-mail providers such as Yahoo!, Hotmail, and Rediff. At a time when e-mail box sizes hadn't touched 100 MB, Gmail offered an incredible 1 GB, and later increased it to 2 GB. Gmail was the first to allow files up to 10 MB as attachments, when the other providers offered a tenth of that. Gmail was also the first to incorporate an instant messaging system within the e-mail service.

In addition, Gmail brought in the concept of Labels, as distinct from the concept of Folders. Labelling allows greater categorisa-

Gmail And Targeted Ads

Google's lifeline is ads. To enhance the chances that visitors to a site will click on the ads, Google has to ensure that the ads are in some way related to the content on the site. So, for example, a Web page on airplanes will have ads from travel agencies, aeronautical engineering firms, flight schools, etc, rather than from marriage bureaus or fast food chains. To be able to deliver relevant ads, Google browses through the page, identifies words that appear frequently, and puts up ads from advertisers who have paid for their ads to appear in those pages that contain those words. So in the earlier example, flight schools will pay to have their ads appear on pages where "Airplane" is mentioned. This is Targeted Advertising. Needless to say, the greater the information collected from the Web page, the better the targeting.

While browsing through a Web page to identify words is harmless, doing this to private e-mails raises heckles—Google uses targeted advertising in Gmail. So if you receive an e-mail that has mention of the word "vacation", you're bound to see ads that suggest getaways.

People have concerns about someone else wading through their mailbox which they themselves access with a password. It raises privacy and legal issues. These concerns were allayed by Google after it was clarified that the process is entirely automated, and that no human being reads the e-mails! Advertisers, too, are not privy to e-mail content and the personal details of the e-mail user. Every user accedes to these conditions while signing up for Gmail (remember the terms of service you didn't bother to read?).

tion capabilities: the same e-mail can be given more than one label. Also, Gmail was the first to use an invitation-based membership model, which meant that people were not allowed to just sign up: they had to be invited by others who already had a Gmail ID. (This, we presume, is to prevent spammers getting Gmail IDs.) The plain layout stands in stark contrast to the cluttered, ad-riddled interfaces of other e-mail providers. Importantly, Gmail does not append an ad in every e-mail sent from its servers, unlike with other popular e-mail providers.

10.2 Using Gmail

10.2.1 Logging in

Gmail is still a “by invitation only” service, but every Gmail user can give out tons of invites. So if you don’t have an ID, just ask a

Google And AJAX

AJAX, short for Asynchronous JavaScript and XML, is a technique that involves using JavaScript to create a Web site client interface and XML (eXtensible Markup Language) to transfer data between the server and client. In ordinary HTML-based pages, the data from the server is sought only when a link is clicked, and the server responds by sending an entire file to the client. In contrast, in AJAX-driven interfaces, since the JavaScript responsible for the presentation aspects is already running on the user’s machine, the data transferred is devoid of these details, and hence is small in comparison. This allows more frequent transfers, which results in a more attractive interface.

An example of increased interactivity is the e-mail ID options that pop up when you are composing an e-mail. The pop up is created locally by the JavaScript, but the information about the address book entries has to be sent by the server.

Some Google services that use AJAX are Gmail, Google Docs and Spreadsheets, and Google Maps.

friend with an ID to send you an invitation! Another place to look for invites is <http://groups-beta.google.com/group/Gmail-Invites>, or even on the Digit forum (www.thinkdigit.com/forum).

Once you have signed up and logged in, you will notice a conspicuous delay before the Inbox shows up. This is because the Gmail interface is a single, large JavaScript file that needs to be loaded first.

Once loaded, the interface, without graphical ads, is a novel experience—no banner ads, no pop-up ads, no Flash ads, no script ads!

All Google services use Google's text-based ads, and these cannot be avoided. But they are not as visually disruptive or bandwidth-hogging as graphical ads, and it is a small price to pay to use the otherwise excellent service.

The Gmail service is available in three flavours—Standard with Chat, Standard without Chat, and HTML. The Standard ones require you to enable JavaScript in your browser. The HTML interface is not as feature-rich, but is practical and even leaner than the standard interface. Since using this interface does away with the delay in loading the JavaScript file, users on a dial-up connection will prefer it.

The first time you use Gmail, it tries to load the Standard with Chat interface. There on, it tries to load the previously-used interface by default. In case you have an unsupported browser or if JavaScript is disabled or the loading is slow, you are presented with the option to choose the HTML version, or correct the browser configuration, or change the browser. If you would like to switch between interfaces, you need to be logged in, and at the bottom of the mailbox page, you can see which interface you are using and the available interface options. Clicking on any of the corresponding links switches the interface.

10.2.2 Navigating the Standard Interface

Besides the usual folder list, the interface has a Settings link on the top right, where you can configure the service. A link to other Google services is available on the top left, which allows you to subscribe to other services such as Groups, Docs and Spreadsheets,



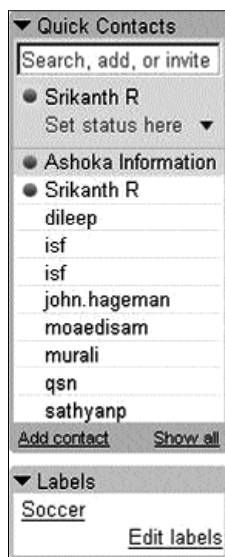
The Standard interface

Orkut, and others. Doing this allows you to roam the Googlescape with a single ID. Below the mail folders, you will see the integrated chat box, where you can engage in instant messaging with other Gmail users. And further below comes the personal Labels box, where you can access labelled e-mails.

10.2.3 Understanding Conversations and Labels

Google refers to e-mails as units of a conversation. A conversation can drag across many e-mails going in both directions. With Gmail, all these e-mails are accessible under a single link in the inbox. Contrast this with other e-mail services where only a "Replied" icon is available to indicate that an e-mail has been replied to. To read the reply, one needs to access the Sent Folder. In Gmails, as long as the receiver and sender are the same, all the e-mails are considered as part of a conversation and are available from the Inbox.

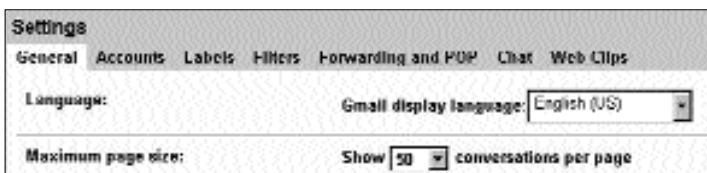
Labels are Google's way of classifying e-mails. An e-mail can have more than one label. Unlike mailbox folders as found in other e-mail providers, in Gmail, Inbox, Sent, Trash, etc. are all pre-defined labels. All incoming e-mails are automatically labelled Inbox by Gmail, and all Sent e-mails are also correspondingly labelled.



Chat box and labels

All e-mails essentially end up in the same repository, but since they are labelled, the relevant subset of all e-mails is available on clicking on the label link. So to access e-mails in the Inbox (or Labelled as Inbox in Gmail's case), one needs to click the Inbox label.

To view the e-mails that are in the repository, Gmail provides the All Mail link, which is not available in case of other e-mail providers. Here you can see all your e-mails without compartmentalisation: e-mails from the trash, spam box, the Inbox, drafts, and others happily intermingling.



Gmail's Settings options

In addition to the predefined labels, Users can add labels of their own—which is what makes Labels so powerful!

10.2.4 Configuring Gmail

The Settings link takes you to the options available in Gmail.

Under the General Tab, among other things, you can set the number of e-mails to be shown per page, add a few lines of text to accompany all your outgoing e-mails as a signature, choose to see a part of the e-mail along with the subject by enabling Snippets (the first few words of the e-mail are reproduced beside the e-mail subject, in the Subject field). Enabling the Vacation Responder allows every e-mail sent to your Inbox to be acknowledged with a message that can be entered in the adjacent text box.

In the Accounts Tab, you can configure Gmail to add a different “From” address to your e-mails even though they are sent using Gmail. The new e-mail ID has to be verified before this fea-

ture can be used. The options for the “from” address show up every time you compose a new e-mail, above the compose box, so the choice can be changed if necessary. This feature would be useful if your primary e-mail service is temporarily unavailable, and you would prefer to continue using that e-mail ID in the “From” field.

Under the Labels tab you can see, rename, remove, and create labels. Using labels is described in detail later. With Filters you can edit, remove, and create filters. Filter creation and usage is described in detail later.

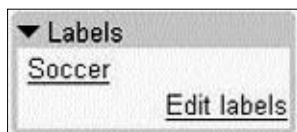
Using the Forwarding and POP tab, you can configure Gmail to send a copy of your incoming mail to another e-mail ID. POP downloads allows the use of offline e-mail clients like Thunderbird and Outlook Express to receive and send e-mails. This would be necessitated if you prefer to store your e-mails locally, so you can access them without being online. Here, detailed instructions on how to configure your e-mail client are also given.

In the Chat tab, you can choose the position of the chat box and whether to store chat transcripts. By default, Gmail informs all the people you have corresponded with about your online status. This may not be to everyone’s taste. The “Auto Add suggested contacts” menu allows modifying this behaviour, so that only those people you’ve explicitly approved for chat can see your status.

Webclips are similar to news tickers—they continuously stream information from various sites. The content that is streamed can be configured under the Webclips tab. Your options include content from news sites like CNN, entertainment sites like Indiainfo, and many more.

10.2.5 Label Creation and Usage

Labels help classify your e-mails. A Label can be created either from the Settings tab, or by using the “More Actions” drop-down box, or by using



Label box

the Edit Labels link in the Label box. Once a label is created it appears in the Label box.

Clicking on the label name will show you all e-mails with the same label. The same e-mail can have more than one label. So if an e-mail currently in the Inbox is labelled “D”, it can be accessed by clicking on the Inbox link or on the “D” link. A label would be fully utilised when used in conjunction with Gmail’s Filtering system.

10.2.6 Filter Creation and Usage

Filters are rules you set for Gmail to apply to incoming e-mails. Using Filters, you can route e-mails to different destinations based on different criteria. In conjunction with Labels, Filtering offers a simple yet powerful way to classify your e-mails.



Filter Options

To create a filter, click on the “Create a Filter” link above the mail box; you can also use the Settings menu to do this. Here you enter the relevant criteria on which to filter. To test if the proper criteria are set, you can run a “Test Search.” If the test results are satisfactory, go to the Next Step. Here you can decide the fate of the e-mails that the Filter will be applied to. You can apply a label to the e-mail so that the all e-mail matching the criteria will be conveniently accessible under the label. If you would prefer not to see that e-mail in the Inbox, enable “Skip the Inbox”.

The Star is another predefined label—like “Trash”—so Starred e-mails are also available under the Starred Link. Filtered e-mails can also be forwarded to another e-mail ID, or they can be deleted.

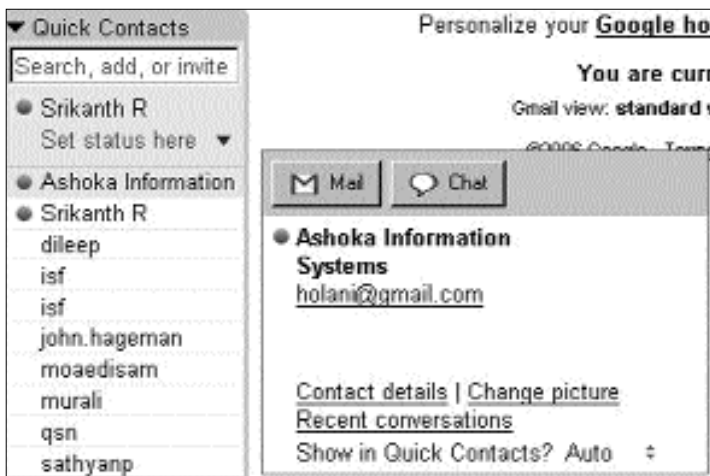
10.2.7 Spam Filtering

Google has a capable spam filter in place. This filter weeds out most spam messages. A few do get through and land up in the Inbox—just a few. These e-mails can be manually marked as Spam by using the “Report Spam” button, so that the next time similar e-mails come, they are automatically routed to the Spam box. Some legitimate e-mails may end up in the spam box, and these can be in turn unmarked as spam by clicking the Not Spam button, so the next time such mails are routed correctly to the Inbox.

Certain e-mails sent by identity thieves, trying to make readers give out personal information, are automatically identified by Gmail. There will be a warning message to the reader stating that the source of the e-mail seems fishy. While most of such e-mails end up in the Spam box, some do land in the Inbox. These can be deleted or reported as “Phishing E-mails”, as explained later, so that Gmail’s spam filter learns to identify similar malicious e-mails.

10.2.8 Using the Inbuilt IM Client

Though severely limited in features—no voice chat, no webcam support—the inbuilt client is more than sufficient when it comes to



IM Client

offering IM functionality. You need not have the Google Talk application installed to use this feature.

When you log into the Gmail mailbox, your previous chat status is restored. The status in the IM client can be changed under the “Set Status Here” link. You can sign out of Chat or sign in and be Available. You can set your status to Busy, in which case others will still be able to send messages, but there will be a gentle reminder that they “may be interrupting.” Custom messages allow you to add a personal touch. Once logged into the IM client, you can receive and send messages—from and to users of either Google Talk or Gmail.

To initiate an IM session, just double-click on any of the contacts listed under the chat box that are online (online contacts have a green circle next to their IDs). A small window pops up near the bottom left of the screen, and you can type in and receive messages as you would when using any IM client. If desired, the pop-out can be put into a separate window by clicking the “pop-out” link.

If the contact is offline, the messages are sent to his Inbox.

10.2.9 Reading and Writing E-mails

Reading an e-mail is the same as is in all e-mail service providers. Gmail offers the ability to prevent images from being automatically loaded. The links “Display Images below” and “Always display images from source” can be used to configure these criteria for each e-mail source. Clicking on the “More Options” link beside the message title will reveal other options like “Add sender to Contact List”. The “Report Phishing” link can be used to flag suspicious e-mails: “Show Original Link” will show the e-mail headers that will reveal information about the actual servers from where the e-mail originated.

Replying to e-mails can be done by using the quick reply box below each e-mail you read. To compose a new e-mail, use the “Compose e-mail” link. This opens the e-mail composer, which comes packed with a rich text editor and spell checking capabilities.



Gmail Search option

As you type the name of the receiver you will notice a pop-up prompting the names, already present in your address book, that tally with the letter entered. As you're composing e-mails, they are automatically saved as drafts periodically. The "Add event info" link adds the Google Calendar functionality. Using this facility as the e-mail is sent, an event is stored in Google Calendar. Receivers of the e-mail can access Calendar to see what the event details are. Google Calendar is described in detail in another chapter.

10.2.10 Searching E-mails

You can search for e-mails based on the occurrence of words in them, using the Search box provided. By clicking on the Search Options link, you can further fine-tune your search. Gmail allows searching on the content in the From, To, and Subject fields, or the message body; your e-mails can also be searched based on their date of receipt and whether it had attachments. In fact, "Search, don't Sort" is Gmail's tagline.

10.3 Advantages of Using the Standard Interface

- In Compose mode, e-mails are periodically auto-saved, so you need not worry about saving a draft midway through a long e-mail.
- Keyboard shortcuts are useable, so, for example, applying italics can be done with the *[Ctrl] + [I]* key combination.
- The inbuilt IM client is enabled only in Standard With Chat mode.
- Add event info adds the Google Calendar functionality, so an event can be directly entered into Google Calendar without visiting the site.

Some minor irritants include the inability to prevent quoting the previous message in the reply. The need to click on links to add a CC or BCC address and to attach a file could have been done away with by keeping these fields expanded in the first place. It is not possible to open e-mails in the background while one e-mail is being read. Use of the browser's back button is not recommended when using the Standard interface. Using the interface's back button usually refreshes the data, leading to delays when compared with loading from the cache, as occurs when using the browser's back button.

10.4 Differences between the Standard and HTML interface

With the absence of the script, a lot of the functionality is lost in the HTML interface. The casualty list is long: all options including the Settings link, Creating Filter and Labels, are disabled; Instant Messaging is disabled; E-mail IDs are not automatically filled in when composing e-mails; selectively choosing read and unread e-mails is not possible. In fact, you can do little else than read and send e-mails!

Yet, for some, nothing is more pleasing than a stripped down e-mail client. Additionally, some of the irritants of the standard interface can be overcome. Quoting previous e-mails can be disabled, the attach files, CC and BCC links are already expanded, the browser's back button can be used to speed page loading from the cache, and many e-mails can be loaded in the background.

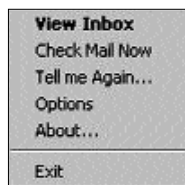
As already mentioned, for those behind a dial-up connection, the HTML interface is recommended.

We'd endorse Gmail *carte blanche*, except for one little—and we mean little—gripe: it is not possible to change the colour scheme!

10.5 Accessories

10.5.1 Gmail Notifier

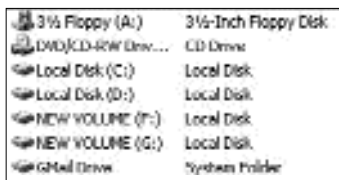
The Gmail Notifier is a standalone application that can be used to keep yourselves informed about new e-mail arrivals without logging into the Gmail site. You need to provide the username and password the first time the Notifier is loaded. It remains in the system tray and frequently checks the mailbox—the checking interval cannot be set. Since entire e-mails are not downloaded, bandwidth usage is frugal. Once loaded, a small pop-up displays snippets of the unread e-mails in the mailbox, one after the other—the slide show is a bit too quick, though. You're also similarly notified about every new e-mail. The number of unread e-mails are shown as a tool-tip when the cursor is placed over the icon in the system tray. Clicking on the "View inbox" menu option opens the Inbox in the default browser.



Notifier Options

10.5.2 Gmail Drive

Gmail Drive is a third-party application that allows utilisation of the humongous greater-than-2-GB Gmail mail box as storage space. As mentioned, it is a third-party tool, meaning Google does not support its use.



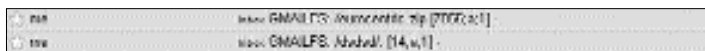
Gmail Drive

From Wikipedia: "GMail Drive is an experimental package that depends on but is not provided by Google. Changes in Google's Gmail system may render Gmail Drive temporarily or permanently inoperable. Google's terms of service for Gmail do not explicitly ban or permit Gmail Drive or the use of Gmail space for files other than email. Heavy use of a Gmail Drive can trigger at least a temporary suspension by Google."

Once installed, Gmail Drive creates a virtual drive on your system, and this is visible along with the other drives in My Computer. Unlike other drives, this one does not have a drive letter associated—it is just

called Gmail Drive. Use GD as you would any other drive on the system. Double-click to open the drive. If you haven't logged in yet, a pop-up will ask you to do so. Once logged in, you can see the files that already exist in the drive. Right-clicking on the drive and checking its properties will show the used and free space.

To store files, you copy and paste as you normally would in the case of any other drive. GD integrates into Windows Explorer and shows up under the "Send to" options when you right-click on a file. Since the data needs to be uploaded to the drive, the speed of your Net connection will dictate the process time.



Gmail Drive Messages

One usual file manipulation procedure not permitted is renaming. All the rest, like creating a new folder (the "NEW FOLDER" name cannot be used), transferring of files from one folder to another, and so on, can be accomplished. Saving files directly from an application to the drive cannot be done, though, since the drive just doesn't show up as a drive with a letter.

In case you're wondering if there's a way to know if the mailbox is being used—you'd be dead not to notice! What Gmail Drive does in the background is send an e-mail with the file as an attachment. These show up in your Inbox as sent by "me". All file manipulations, like creating of a new folder and transferring of files between folders, will also show up as e-mails in the Inbox. If you uninstall Gmail Drive, the files in the drive will still be accessible from your Inbox.

In conclusion, Gmail Drive is a handy application that allows putting the Gmail mailbox to better use. But given Google's displeasure regarding extensive use of the tool, it is not recommended for users planning to store and retrieve large files frequently on a daily basis. While it does accomplish its core task of uploading files to Gmail without hassles, the semi-polished nature of the product cannot escape a frown.

10.6 Google Talk

10.6.1 Introduction

Like Gmail, this instant messaging client was a late entrant to the arena. Compared to the other IM clients, Google Talk (GT) is extremely lean. Continuing on the sparse interface of Gmail, GT does away with the bloat that has become associated with IM clients. No checking weather or stock quotes or playing games while using GT!

10.6.2 Using Google Talk

After installing GT, on logging in for the first time, you will see that the contacts list is already populated. This is because GT borrows the address book from Gmail. The contacts need not be all Gmail users. You can change the contact list behaviour by clicking on the View button at the bottom of the IM windows. To see only Gmail users, deselect the “Show All Address book Contacts” option. Online contacts have a green circle to their left and an “Available” subscript. Even if the contact is only using Gmail’s Standard with Chat interface, the status will be “Available”—but you cannot use voice in this case. Setting your own status is simple, and as discussed elsewhere, you can also set it to the current track your media player is playing.



Google Talk's view options



Changing status in GT

Besides the Contact list, you can see the Add and View contacts button at the bottom and a Settings link at the top. That's all the client sports. Compared to the bells and whistles on other IM clients, GT seems to be on a starvation diet.

Starting an IM session is simple—double-clicking on any of your online friends opens a chat box. Type a message and press [Enter] for it to be sent across. Unlike other IM clients, you will not be able

to add smilies or change the font colour or strength easily. GT keeps things pretty austere. You can also send text messages to a friend who is using the Standard with Chat version of Gmail—the message will pop up in his browser.

To start a Voice chat, click on the Call button. After you press Call, you'll be able to talk (assuming you've set up your headset properly) as well as text-chat. You'll notice three buttons: "Email," "End Call," and "Mute." The e-mail button is, of course, meant for quickly sending over an e-mail, though we're wondering who'd do that while chatting. One useful feature is that the microphone and output sound levels are controllable via sliders right in the chat window. Use them to set the appropriate levels if you didn't already do it before you began the chat session.

If a person is offline, you can either send him a text message or record a voice message that will be played when he logs in the next time. An e-mail is sent to the person's Gmail Inbox containing the message. If it is a text message, the text is provided; in case of voice messages, the message title contains the length of the message, and it can be heard online or downloaded as an MP3.

10.6.3 Configuring Google Talk

The controls are much simpler and easy to access since there are no three-level-deep menu systems to navigate. The Sole link on the interface, besides the View and Add Contacts buttons, is the Settings link, which can be used to configure GT. There are significantly fewer options to be tweaked when compared to other IM clients. Cosmetic changes like skins and themes, and changing font styles and strength, can be done through the Settings link. The headphone and mic settings for voice chat can also be set here. By default, a history of your chats is stored in your Gmail account. This can be disabled.

10.6.4 Concluding Remarks

Google Talk comes across as an application built with a single purpose. The biggest drawback is the lack of video/webcam support. So far, Google has not allowed cross-client conversation like Yahoo! and

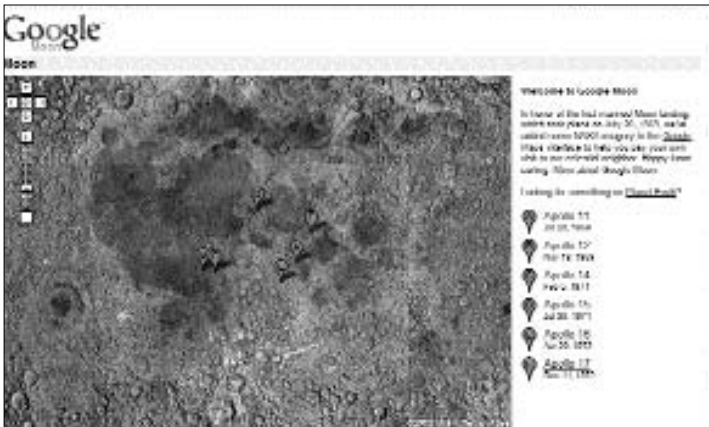
MSN Live have. And you cannot indulge in community chat as is possible with Yahoo! Messenger.

But, unlike other IM clients, Google does not make you pay for using their service by exposing you to a continuous stream of ads. For those wishing to use a no-frills tool for functional communication through text and voice, GT is recommended. Others more interested in a sort of “social networking” tool will be disappointed.

Google Moon and Google Mars

11.1 What Is Google Moon?

Google Labs didn't rest with providing services like Google Maps and Google Earth. In 2005, on the 36th anniversary of the first human landing on the moon by Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, Google announced an extension of their mapping service to lunar space—July 20, 2005, Google Inc. launched Google Moon (<http://moon.google.com>) with imagery taken from NASA.

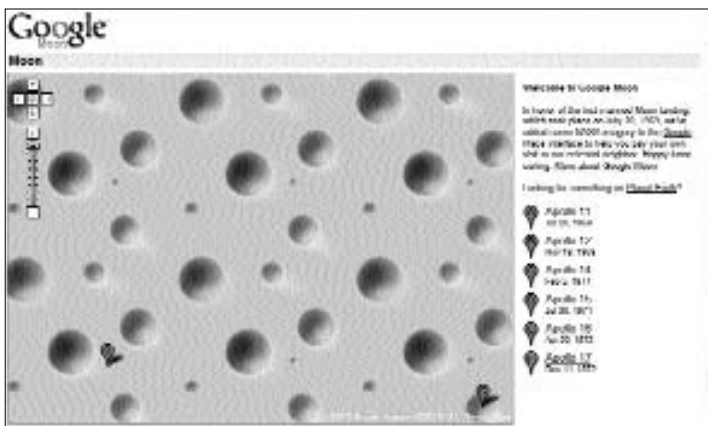


The lunar surface as seen in Google Moon

By the 100th anniversary of human landing on moon, Google intends to fully integrate Google Local search capabilities with Google Moon, allowing users to search business addresses, and numbers and hours of operation of lunar space—besides other Moon-centric local information (of course, they've assumed we'll have colonised the moon by then).

At <http://moon.google.com>, one can see a map of the lunar surface. The zooming tools at the top left of the map allow you to zoom in and out.

Currently, Google Moon has mapped the six Apollo spacecraft landings (Apollo 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17) with their respective dates and people on the respective Apollo mission. All these missions have been mapped with the letters A, B, C, D, E, and F (to the respective Apollo missions) on the Google Moon map, chronologically. For instance, A represents Apollo 11 on the map.

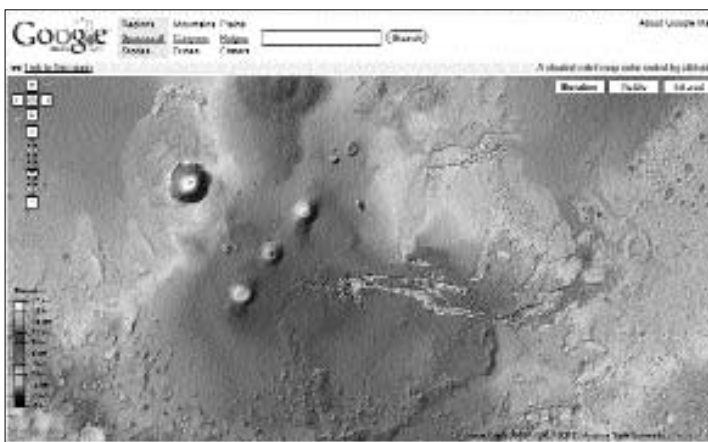


Cheese!

The Google Copernicus Hosting Environment and Experiment in Search Engineering (G. C. H. E. E. S. E.) has a sense of humour: on lunar surface, as you zoom into the map to its maximum, the surface of the moon changes to Swiss cheese!

11.2 What Is Google Mars?

After Google Moon, Google expanded its online mapping service by offering ordinary users the chance to explore Mars. Google Mars' launch date happened to be the 151st birthday of Mars astronomer Percival Lowell. The images of the Red Planet are captured by Thermal Emission Imaging System (THEMIS) on the Mars Odyssey spacecraft through two different missions—Mars Global Surveyor and 2001 Mars Global Odyssey.



A view of the Martian surface as in Google Mars

Google has worked with the scientists at Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona. The map of the Red Planet can be accessed at www.google.com/mars/ (mars.google.com works, too). Google Mars allows you to view the surface of Mars by an elevation (colour-coded altitude) map, black and white map, and an infrared map. The surface can be navigated in the same way as in Google Maps. You can switch between the elevation map, visible (black and white) map, or infrared using the buttons at the top right of the map.

What can you find on Google Mars?

The three types of maps are provided by Google Mars for three dif-

ferent purposes.

○ **Elevation map:**

Here, colour-coding based on altitude enables users to use the colour key (at the bottom left on the map) to estimate elevations of the surface. The map is generated with data from the Mars Orbiter Laser Altimeter (MOLA) on NASA's Mars Global Surveyor spacecraft.

○ **Visible (Black and White) map:**

This is a map of the actual surface as visible when one orbits Mars. The images are captured by the Mars Orbiter Camera (MOC) on NASA's Mars Global Surveyor spacecraft.

○ **Infrared map:**

The sharpest map of Mars ever made, where details as small as 750 feet (230 metres) are visible. The cooler areas on Mars appear in darker tones, and warmer areas appear in lighter tones. These details are captured by THEMIS of Mars Odyssey Spacecraft.

What can you search for on Google Mars?

As of this writing, Google Mars has nine different features you can use:

○ **Regions:**

Search for regions (if you know any!), or simply click on the Regions tag, which shows the 33 different regions on Mars' surface. The search can be limited to the current region accessed by the user. When you click on the name of any region, an info-cloud appears on the map. The cloud contains information about feature like the region type, location (longitudes and latitudes), size (kilometres and miles), year in which it was named, and what it was named after. For example, the cloud for Noachis Terra shows the following information:

Feature: Noachis Terra

Type: Terra, terrae

Location: 44.7S, 10E

Size: 4800km/

Named in: 1979

Named for: Biblical; Noah's region

This procedure can be performed with other features as well.

○ Spacecraft:

Like regions, the landing sites of spacecrafts on Mars can also be searched. The method of searching remains the same. The information provided for each spacecraft includes its name, location, launch date, and result of the mission.

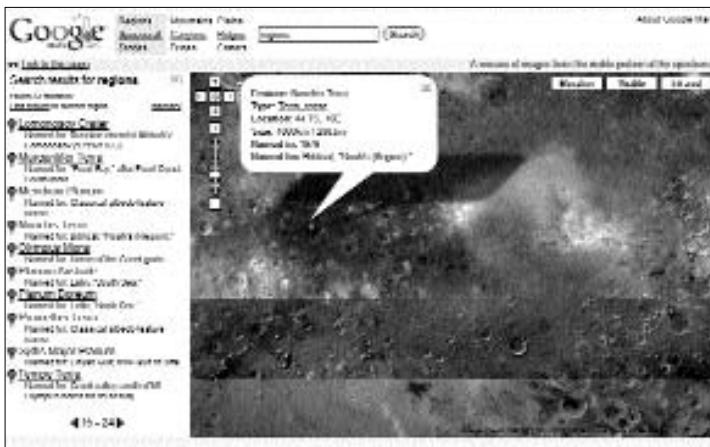
○ Stories:

If you're interested in stories related to particular places, click on the "stories" feature. As of this writing, there are 118 stories.

○ Mountains, Plains, Canyons, Ridges, Dunes, and Craters

When you search for these, you'll find articles on each of them with the respective source and date mentioned. More information can be found from the info-cloud, which gives a link to the article related to that mountain with source and date.

If you want to know more about Mars, you can always Google it, or find it on <http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/>. At the centre of Google



Searching with Google Mars

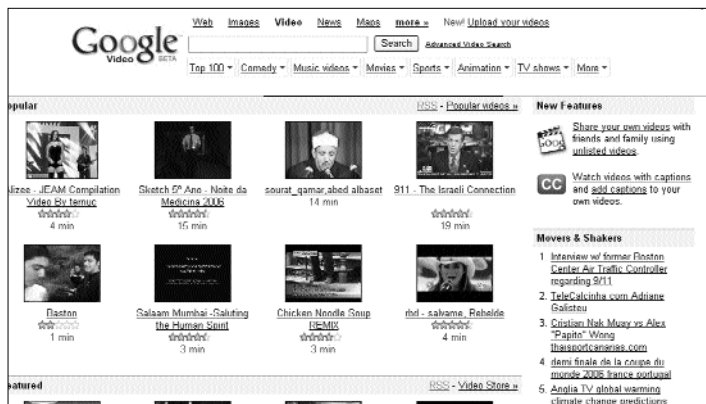
Mars, there is a gigantic mosaic of Mars created with 17,000 individual infrared photos at a scale that can show details as close as 750 feet across!

Neither Google Moon's nor Google Mars' data can be seen in 3D as in Google Earth (for now).

Google Video

With increasing bandwidth, online video streaming has gained prominence, resulting eventually in the launch of Google Video. Here you can find, watch, upload and download videos of subject categories and duration. There is also a separate official Google Videoblog for the contributors of video upload program.

Google also recently acquired competitor YouTube for \$1.65 billion in stock. YouTube will continue to function by the same name.



Find your favourite videos here!

On YouTube, members are provided customisation options like My Videos, Favorites, Groups, Friends, Inbox, Playlists, Subscription, and Channels. Besides watching and sharing, members can comment on the videos.

Google Video allows users to submit and view video content such as home videos, movies, advertisements, TV shows, music videos, documentaries, personal productions, sports, and educational videos. Pornography put Google in the eye of a controversy soon enough. The subsequent inclusion of a reporting system tries to keep inappropriate content at bay.

Google Video search is reliably fast, easy to use, and accurate. Video clips can be viewed in the browser itself or can be downloaded for Windows / Mac, Video iPod, and Sony PSP. You can watch non-copy-protected, rented, or purchased video. But you need to have high-speed Internet connectivity!

12.1 Getting Started



Get started from the home page!

Go to <http://video.google.com>, and you'll see different categories of videos—Popular, Featured, Comedy, Featured on AOL, Music, Movie trailers, TV shows, Sports and Education. On the side panel you can find a list of “Movers & Shakers” and the Top 10 videos. Also look out for Google Picks—videos chosen by the Google Video team.

12.1.1 Searching for videos

You can either search for videos by categories, or by typing relevant text in the search box. You'll get all information along with

the search results about the video—copy-protected content, price of the video, popular rating by stars, etc. Click on the desired video and start watching!

Besides categorising videos, YouTube offers searching videos by channels (Comedians, Directors, Musicians, and Politicians), and Groups made by site members.

12.1.2 Playing a video

For streaming videos in your browser (Internet Explorer 5.0+ or Firefox 1.1+ or Safari 1.0+), you'll need Macromedia Flash Player 7.0 or higher. The other basic requirements for playing video are Windows 2000/XP with Intel P III 1 GHz, 128 MB RAM, 16 MB video memory; Mac OS X 1.3.9 or higher with minimum 750 MHz G4, 256 MB RAM, 16 MB video memory, and naturally, a good broadband connection.

The Google Video Viewer is a Flash-based player with all the necessary controls, and if you wish to share a video with anyone, just click on “Send This Link.”

12.2 Uploading A Video

Videos can be uploaded by anyone with a Google account and the legal rights to that video. You can upload a video to Google Video by clicking “Upload your videos” at the top of the page and then filling up the upload form. Google accepts videos in the AVI, MPEG, Real, QuickTime, and Windows Media formats.

If the video is larger than 100 MB, you'll have to use the Uploader for uploading videos. Whether the video should be publicly available or unlisted can be chosen from the form. Unlisted videos are not included in search results if someone searches for them. Unlike Google Video, YouTube offers tips and guidance for making better home-videos in its Video Toolbox section.



Copy the HTML code and paste it into your blog

12.2.1 Downloading a video

You can also watch videos in Google Video Player, which you can download from the site. When you download a video, you actually get a .gvp (Google Video Pointer) file, which lets you stream the video without actually opening your browser. Once you've streamed it, it gets saved in a folder called "My Google Videos" under My Videos, and you can play it whenever you want. You can also download from YouTube by visiting keepvid.com and following the really simple directions, but please check for the legal ramifications of doing this before you go ahead.

12.3 Embedding Videos On Your Site Or Blog

You can embed videos on your blog or Web site, using a bit of HTML code that Google and YouTube give you. On the video viewing page, click on Blog, and then Embed HTML, and you'll get the code you can paste to your blog or site.

In Conclusion

Video content providers have a long way to go as broadband connections get faster. Google's acquisition of YouTube surely holds much for video seekers, contributors, and producers. People have gotten inspired, and have now started posting their own amateur movies and documentaries to Google Video and YouTube. When using these services, make sure you have the necessary legal rights to upload any video content, and that it's not copyrighted by someone else. Also, if you find a video obscene or inappropriate, report it. Google Video is working on delivering video to the mobile phone, but the effort is still in the primary stages. Till then, log on to <http://video.google.com> and www.youtube.com and hit Play!

Dodgeball

NOTE

Dodgeball.com is based in New York and only available in 22 cities in North America. Given the popularity of Orkut in India and speculation that Orkut and Dodgeball will merge, we're presuming that the service will be available here soon.

Imagine yourself at a fast food joint—your favourite—in your city. So when you're looking to 'hook up' with your buddies and have a nice time with your friends, use Dodgeball. It's a location-based mobile social networking service through which you can link up with your friends and acquaintances in your vicinity.

Dodgeball.com is a start-up based in New York. After its acquisition, Google enabled the option of logging into the service using a Google ID in addition to the usual Dodgeball login. Using Dodgeball is free, but users are charged standard text messaging rates.



The Dodgeball.com homepage

Once registered on Dodgeball or logged in through your Google Account ID, you can SMS (text message) your contacts and let them know your whereabouts in the city or other cities (22 cities). You can also stay connected with your friends, acquaintances, get to know friends-of-friends and find new crushes—much like in Orkut.

The service is designed for social networking based on locations mapped by users. A map of the city is available where favourite and popular check-ins (frequently-visited hang-outs) can be mapped by users to let others know where they've been lately.

For example, Dodgeball users log in through their cell phones by texting their location, say ABC restaurant, to 36343 (“dodge”) with the message “@ ABC restaurant”, and all your friends and friends-of-friends who are nearby and logged in to Dodgeball will get a message about your whereabouts. Later, when you log in into your Dodgeball account, you can see a map of your check-ins and your friends' check-ins too.

13.1 How It Works



You can sign in using your Google ID or your Dodgeball ID

There are few basic requirements in order to make best out of this Google service.

- A cell phone with a mobile connection (obviously)
- An account at Dodgeball.com through Google Accounts or directly at Dodgeball.com
- Your friends should have registered at Dodgeball, or you can add them

Now let's see how this service works.

- Step 1: Sign up for Dodgeball using your Google ID (if you have one) or get a Dodgeball ID.
- Step 2: Log in to Dodgeball by registering your phone details and selecting your service provider. You'll receive a four digit code

on your mobile phone which you use to activate your phone

- Step 3: When you log in to your Dodgeball account from a mobile phone by sending an SMS about your location (say, “@ ABC restaurant”) to 36343, Dodgeball will send a text message to the circle of your Dodgeball-registered friends.

The message looks something like this: “[Your Name] is at ABC Restaurant (5th bldg, XYZ street)”.

You are logged in as **haystack@gmail.com** in **Minneapolis / St. Paul** (logout) [Suggestions? Bugs? Send them here.](#)

Today

Brian S. @ Maxwell's American Cafe 9:02PM

Ed K. @ Maxwell's American Cafe 9:02PM

Matt F. @ Groveland Tap 4:57PM

Katie F. @ Al Baker's Restaurant 1:01PM

Ed K. @ Champs Americana - Minneapolis 12:46PM

Today Yesterday Tuesday Monday Sunday Saturday Friday

top dodgeball users in Minneapolis / St. Paul (based on number of check-ins, last 10 days)

Jenni (22)	Bill R. (16)	Ed K. (13)	Cindi M. (13)	kaye J. (13)	Matt K. (13)	wendy (13)	Garrett L. (12)	Aaron L. (11)	Tim D. (10)

Dodgeball can help you stay in touch

Also, a message is sent to friends of your friends (a maximum five) with your name and location. You will also receive pictures if you have a camera phone and if you selected the option to receive pictures.

Conclusion

Social Networking Fever has more than caught on this year. During the month of October, Dodgeball.com saw a daily 185 users per million, according to Alexa.com (as on October 29, 2006).

Google's social networking service, Orkut, has recently been in the news in India for misappropriation by several users. Dodgeball too can turn out to be dangerous if maliciously used—the risks could be high if a stalker gets to know the location of potential prey.

Dodgeball is working towards using Global Positioning Systems (GPS) to collect information about users' locations and providing them with up-to-date maps of their friends' locations and vice versa. It would be interesting to see whether any new features will be added to this service and when (if ever) it goes global.

Hello

After Google Talk, Hello is another Instant Messaging (IM) service by Google, with a different take. It is an application for sharing digital images with friends—no Web sites and no e-mail required to share your photos with Hello. The only requirement is that both the sender and receiver need to have the Hello program installed. Get it at www.hello.com.

Picasa launched the Hello service under the Google's umbrella to share photos using P2P. You can share with your friend while chatting—no resizing high-quality photos or wasting time waiting for the images to upload. Blogger users can also upload photos and add captions directly through Hello. It also has Bloggerbot, which is in your buddy list, and directly uploads photos to your Blogger blog. At present, Hello only supports JPEG files.

14.1 What It Does

You can send images using IM and simultaneously add comments and chat with your friend. The receiver will receive images in a few seconds (depending on your connection), and then the images can be saved or printed. If you're well-versed with IM messengers, then using Hello should be a piece of cake.

Hello's only drawback is that you can't share pictures with more than one user at the same time. But it can be used with or without Picasa, even though it's a Picasa product—photos for transfer can be selected from Picasa directly.

Your photos and chat are secure, as the application connects you by peer to peer networking even when your firewall is on. All chat and photos transferred are protected with 128-bit Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) encryption.

14.2 How Hello Works

Hello's user interface is very simple, with large task buttons for sending pictures, chatting, or inviting friends.



The main Hello page



Share photos and chat with your buddies

Smiley and Fun Shortcuts

When you send smileys in a message, they drop in from the top of the picture display window. (LOL, Heart/Love/XO, :), :(, :|, :P). The flying smileys can stop by selecting an option to Options Menu. Here are few automated word shortcuts:

np = No problem

b = Bye

c = Cool

h = Hi / Hello

k = OK

brb = Be right back

ty = Thanks / Thank you

l = LOL (laughing out loud)

n = No

y = Yes

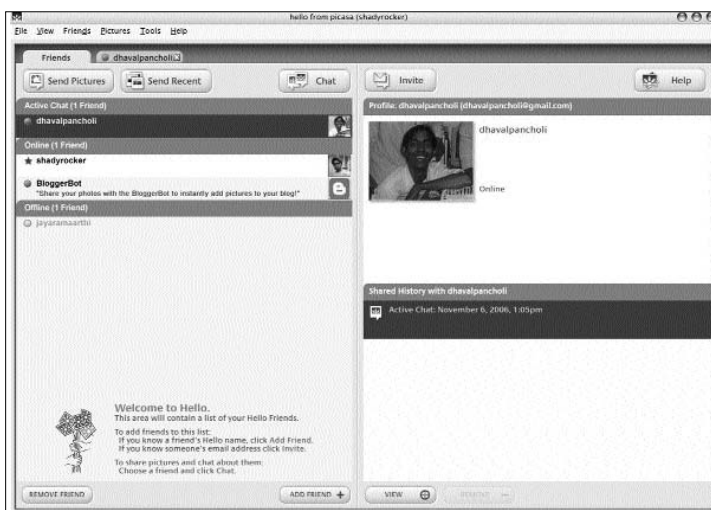
bfn = Bye for now

md = Most definitely

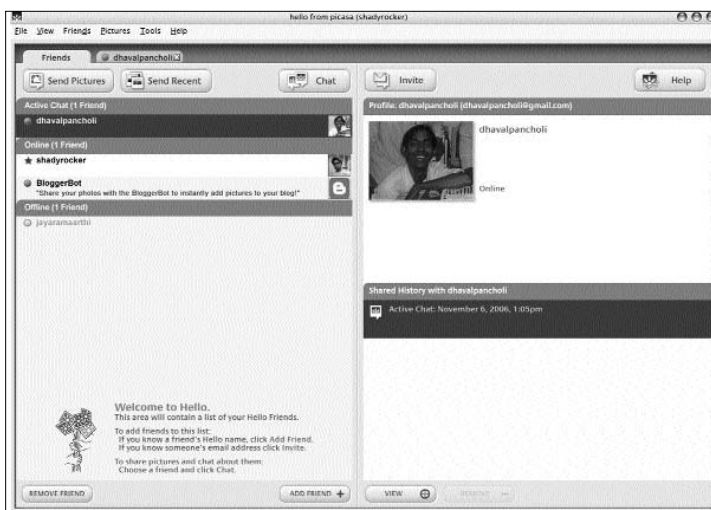
When images are sent, Hello optimises them for quick transmission. Received images are stored in the My Pictures folder by default, but you can change this if you want. You can drag and drop images from any folder with Windows Explorer or Picasa albums. While you chat, you can also see which photo your friend is currently viewing, thanks to a small pop up window above the filmstrip on the right.



Watch the smileys drop!



All chat sessions are saved and shared with your buddy



All chat sessions are saved and shared with your buddy



Log in to your blogger blog and manage your pictures



Customise your photos

BloggerBot is a kind of gateway by which images with captions can be post directly on your Blogger blog. Click BloggerBot in your Friends list, and you'll reach the Blogger home page. So you can log in to your Blogger blog and manage your photos directly!

14.3 In Conclusion

High-resolution photos take time to upload to a Web site or attach with an e-mail. Photo sharing is made easy, fast and exciting with Hello. The photos remain safe as the program uses AES encrypted connection to bridge two users. An easy-to-understand and use interface makes the photo-sharing experience smooth and peaceful.

Google Groups

The screenshot shows the Google Groups homepage. At the top, there's a Google logo and navigation links for Web, Images, Video, News, Maps, and more. Below this is a search bar with the text "Search Groups" and a link to "Advanced Groups Search". The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column has a "Find a group" section with a search bar and a "Search for a group" button. Below this are links for Popular, Health, and Home categories, each with a "more >" link. The middle column has a "Start a group" section with a form to create a new group, including fields for "Name your group", "Group email", and "Group member email addresses". The right column has sections for "Sign in to Google Groups", "Sign up for Google Groups", and "Groups Beta".

Start by creating groups from the homepage

Google Groups is a free service for communicating, discussing and sharing ideas through e-mail or at the Web site. You can create, manage, and browse groups to seek or give opinions, advice, resources, or information. Like several other group sites on the Web, it has all the basic features—search for topics of your interest, or browse for information posted on the groups.

Google Groups was Deja News before it was bought by Google in 2001. Deja News was popular for maintaining archives of Usenet newsgroups. The Usenet archives, containing a billion posts on content dating back to 1981, are accessible to members of Google Groups. On December 2, 2004, Google launched Groups Beta, with a new look and improvements over the earlier Groups. The new beta enables mailing lists and public discussions. You can bookmark topics that interest you and receive replies on starred topics on your group page.

To log in and sign up for Groups, all you need is a Google account. The Groups work like other group sites on the Web—each group has its own e-mail address so members can get updates and stay in touch with the group.

Create and manage your group

The first step is to set up a group by filling in the relevant information and selecting the access level (public, announcement-only, or restricted). The next step is to add members, either directly using their e-mail addresses, or by inviting them to join the group.

Group Settings:

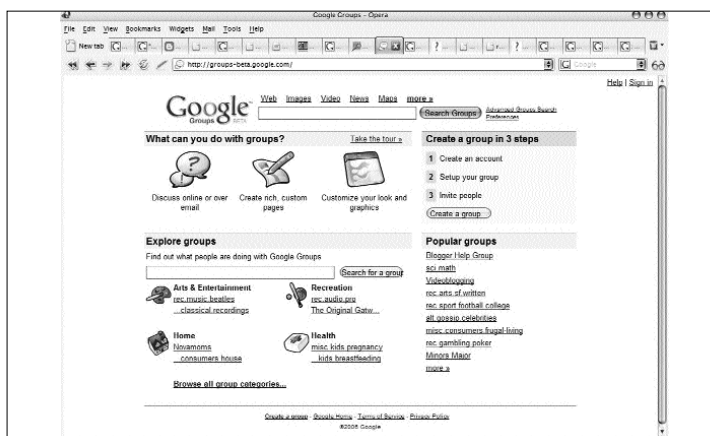
Your group's settings can be edited any time, and they contain the following options:

General:

Group name, Description, Web address and Group e-mail.

Appearance:

You can change the look of your group to one of nine options, and customise the fonts and colours of the sidebars.



The new look of the Groups homepage

Access Rights:

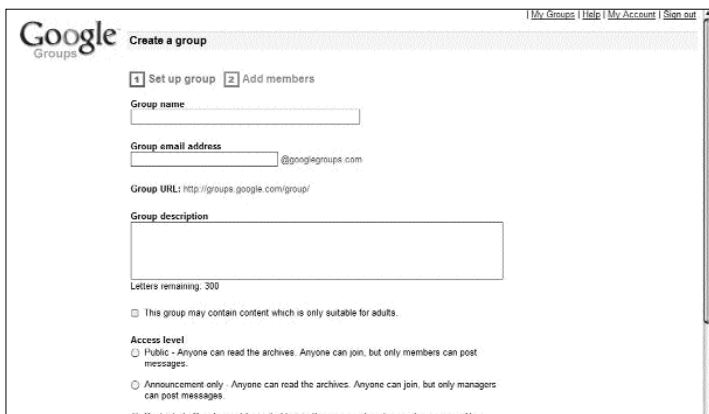
Any changes you might want in members' access rights can be made under this menu.

Navigation:

The navigation order and visibility of the group subsections are customisable. If you have public access to your group, you can hide the member list by clicking on "Hide" next to it on the page. The sub-sections can be renamed from here.

E-mail Delivery:

Under this menu, the e-mails that would be sent to members may have customised subject prefixes, such as a parenthesis or bracket. Select a footer (default) or make a custom footer. Message reply options can be set as reply to whole group, to author, to the owner (you), or user-defined.

The screenshot shows the 'Create a group' page on Google Groups. At the top, there are links for 'My Groups', 'Help', 'My Account', and 'Sign out'. The main heading is 'Create a group' with two numbered steps: '1 Set up group' and '2 Add members'. The form includes fields for 'Group name', 'Group email address' (with a dropdown menu showing '@googlegroups.com'), and 'Group URL' (pre-filled with 'http://groups.google.com/group/'). There is a large text area for 'Group description' with a 'Letters remaining: 300' indicator. Below this, there is a checkbox for 'This group may contain content which is only suitable for adults.' and a section for 'Access level' with two radio button options: 'Public - Anyone can read the archives. Anyone can join, but only members can post messages.' and 'Announcement only - Anyone can read the archives. Anyone can join, but only managers can post messages.' At the bottom, there is a small note: '(*) Restricted - Emails must be invited to use the forum and post or read messages. View'.

Choose the desired settings for your group

Categories:

Selection of a category for your group is made from this option. Select a category by Topic or Region. If your choice is not listed, you can search from the search box.

Advanced:

Advanced options include selecting a primary language for the group and deleting the group. The group can also act as a remote archive for the mail lists hosted on other services.

Groups' settings help customise the functioning of the group activities according to the options selected. Management tasks below Group settings on the menu bar help in management of pending messages and members of the group. You can also edit your membership in the group, in which you can edit your e-mail settings and your nickname in the group.

Search for a group

If you're looking for a group on a particular topic, region, language, activity level or number of users, you can use the Group Directory. Google Groups includes the Usenet newsgroups, each of which has sub-groups. Such groups and sub-groups are separated by a full stop—for instance, *comp.windows.vista*. Here “comp” (computer) is the group, “windows” is the sub-group, and “vista” is the topic for which that particular group was created. Here are few short forms of the top Usenet groups:

The screenshot shows the Google Groups Directory interface. At the top, there are navigation links: "My Groups", "Favorites", "Profile", "Help", "My Account", and "Sign out". Below the Google logo is a search bar with a "Search" button. The main heading is "Group directory" with a sub-heading "All groups". The page is divided into three columns of filters: Topic, Language, and Activity. The Topic column lists categories like Adult, Arts and Entertainment, Home, Other, People, Recreation, Science and Technology, and Society. The Language column lists languages like Chinese, Croatian, English, Esperanto, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Ladino, and Malay. The Activity column lists activity levels like High, Medium, and Low. Below these filters, there is a section for "Groups 1-15 of about 100002". The first group listed is "alt.gossip.celebrities" with details: Category: Society > Celebrities, Language: English, High activity, 5204 subscribers, Usenet. Below this is a link to "rec.sport.pro-wrestling".

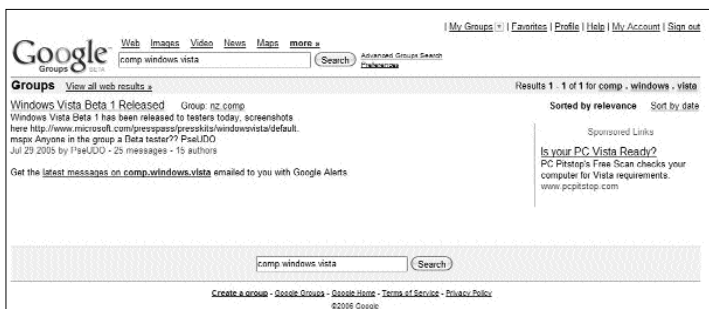
Topic	Language	Activity
Adult (57)	Chinese (172)	High (1539)
Arts and Entertainment (456)	Croatian (150)	Medium (2389)
Home (43)	English (5613)	Low (6072)
Other (1004)	Esperanto (3)	
People (257)	Estonian (12)	
Recreation (847)	Finnish (131)	
Science and Technology (251)	French (302)	
Society (645)	German (533)	
	Hebrew (4)	
	Hindi (2)	
	Hungarian (9)	
	Indonesian (38)	
	Italian (684)	
	Japanese (71)	
	Ladino (1)	
	Malay (2)	

Groups 1-15 of about 100002.

[alt.gossip.celebrities](#)
 Category: Society > Celebrities, Language: English
 High activity, 5204 subscribers, Usenet

[rec.sport.pro-wrestling](#)

Search for a group from the directory



Feed in the appropriate words and get what you're looking for

alt = alternative discussions

biz = business services, products, reviews, etc.

comp = relating to computers

sci = relating to the sciences

news = relating to Usenet net-news

soc = social issues

rec = relating to recreation like sports, games, hobbies, etc.

misc = miscellaneous topics

Discussion groups can be moderated or non-moderated, depending upon the options chosen by the group owner. To post replies to discussions or topics in a group, you need to join it first. You can also bookmark topics under "My Topics".

In Conclusion

Groups are communities created by and for people with similar ideas and tastes, and for sharing information and resources. Posting messages, searching, customising group pages and browsing groups have improved under Google Groups Beta.

There isn't any security against spammers and flammers, but the new Google Groups Beta lets you mask e-mail addresses. Unlike other groups sites (like that of Yahoo!), Google Groups lacks polls and attachments to messages, but it is still in beta, so improvements are no doubt in the pipeline.

